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VINET AND HIS CORRESPONDENTS.\*

VINET'S correspondence is a contribution of great value to the spiritual and literary history of the 19th century. We owe a debt of gratitude to MM. Charles Secrétan and Eugène Rambert for the judgment and care with which the letters have been edited. M. Rambert is, as is generally known, the biographer of Vinet. His qualities as a literary critic specially fit him for this task, and so careful has he been to keep himself in the background, and to let the reader come into contact with Vinet through his own words and acts, that the portrait is one of rare faithfulness and vigour.

M. Charles Secrétan, professor of philosophy in Lausanne, whose powerful intellect is leaving a deep furrow in the philosophy of the day, was one of the most intimate friends and, as it were, the spiritual son of Vinet. No one, therefore, could be better qualified to edit faithfully the writings of his friend and teacher.

With Vinet we are always on the mountain tops. We should seek in vain in his correspondence for the inexhaustible vein of humour which delights in keen touches, sparkling allusions, bold metaphors—the charming *déshabille*, so to speak, of a mind unfolding itself at its ease in the familiarities of friendly intercourse. Vinet is always grave without being timid. He is grave after the fashion of Port Royal—a gravity harmonising with perfect sincerity. In comparing his letters with his books, we see how truly the man was in the author, and from what a pure and deep fountain within welled up his written thoughts. His greatest fear was of appearing other and better than he really was; this fear haunted him, and whenever he had published any utterance of peculiarly high and generous sentiments, we are sure to find in his letters repeated confessions of what he called his own unworthiness. We are all apt more or less to don the buskin; almost involuntarily we stand on tiptoe when we begin to address the public; it seems necessary to strain the voice a little to make oneself heard.

\* *Lettres d'Alexandre Vinet et de quelques uns de ses Correspondants.* Georges Bridel, editeur, Lausanne.

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Vinet had the greatest possible dread of this sort of stage effect—the exaggeration and over-colouring into which those who live much before the public are almost inevitably drawn. We may quote one passage from his letters in illustration of this. He had just taken the prize of the Society of Christian Morals, for his noble essay on religious liberty; a distinction all the more flattering, because it was conferred by such judges as M. Guizot, M. de Broglie, and M. de Barante. Writing to M. Staffer, one of the umpires, and a man of great moral and intellectual distinction, he says:—

“When I consider that your favourable judgment on my paper cannot have been won by any literary merits, but rather by the love which you suppose me to have at heart for the cause I have undertaken to defend; and when I then look within, how deep is the humiliation to which unwittingly you subject me. Painfully I feel that this advocate of toleration has not yet been able to implant it in his own heart; that this champion of liberty has often infringed that of others; that, in a word, I see the good and do the evil. I cannot bear that, after having so favourably judged my book, you should be deceived about the writer. I thank God, however, that this task, of which I was not worthy, has been made a means of good to me, and has filled me with a great respect for the rights of conscience.”\*

Another of Vinet's letters shows how genuine this tenderness of conscience was. When proposed to fill a chair of great importance in his own country, the very position which he most desired, he wrote to one of his friends, a man of influence: “God will bless you if you say all that there is to be said against me.” In the sharp struggle for existence this was certainly a singular and original way of pleading his own cause! Everything depends, of course, on the object which a man sets before himself in life. With Vinet, as with Pascal (whose works he so admirably edited, and whom in so many points he resembled), the great end of life was the attainment of the Christian ideal. In this he believed with all his heart; he was ever pressing towards it, *seeking it with sighs*, as says the author of the “Pensées.” To us it seems as if he attained it as nearly as is possible in this earthly life. He would not forgive us for saying so, and yet this is just the impression which the reading of his letters produces. This constant sorrowful pursuit of the Christian ideal did not lead him to isolate himself from society in a sort of Christian Thebaid. Though he was a great sufferer physically, and was visited with heavy trials in his home life—sorrows shared by his noble wife—he threw himself heartily into all the intellectual contests of his time, with a breadth of sympathy with men and things, and a rare combination of qualities, which made him, as a writer, always discriminating and often brilliant. He was, at the same time, an enthusiast for the beautiful. The severity of his principles in no way hindered his exquisite enjoyment and masterly rendering of things lovely and pure, but he never allowed his sound judgment to be biassed by any æsthetic glamour.

\* Lettre 27.

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Living as he did in comparative obscurity, far from the great centres where reputations are made, and ephemeral distinction is lightly achieved, he exerted a steadily growing influence by his teaching, his sermons, and his books. He did a most important work also by his valuable contributions to *Le Semeur*, which was from 1830 to 1848 the most influential organ of Protestantism, under the able editorship of M. Henri Lutteroth, one of Vinet's closest and most honoured friends.

"I imagine," wrote M. de Sainte Beuve to Vinet, in 1840, "that one of the great attractions of Paris, and indeed the only one which makes it worth while to live there, is that one is in a good position for watching the comedy. But the worst of it is this comedy itself, in which one has always to look on, never to act, and has to accept this low world as a show, not as a field of labour. All this is so different in Lausanne. That is what moved my envy on a certain visit under the shadow of the cathedral, where I saw a whole life of study, of sacrifice, of humble, unremitting activity. I must not tell you all that I think, for fear of vexing you, and keeping you from writing to me again."

No better description could be given of Vinet's life of retirement and yet of incessant activity and usefulness. The anchorite's cell, close to the cathedral of Lausanne, had its great windows open, not only towards the hills, bright with divine illumination, but also on to the arena where the great controversies of the age were being fought out; and many a pungent and prophetic word fell from the lips of the thoughtful dweller there.

Let it be thoroughly understood that Vinet was in the highest sense a free-thinker—that is, a man singularly free from the restraints of prejudice, and yet at the same time an evangelical Christian by firm conviction and hearty choice.

It is a grave injustice to imagine that true liberty of thought is only compatible with the scepticism which holds that life has no higher meaning or purpose than amusement. This liberty of sublime dilettantism costs less effort than the earnest search after truth, inspired by the conviction that there is such a thing as truth, that God has revealed it to us, and that life is not a kaleidoscope. The mind of man is not free because it denies, and in the measure in which it denies; it is free in the measure in which it inquires. Liberty of thought means liberty of sincere and impartial inquiry. To deny or to affirm from custom or from prejudice only, is to follow blindly (as in the story of Panurge's sheep), whether the leader be a reverend Jesuit father, or a pessimist of the latest school. Thus defined, the noble epithet, a "free-thinker," belongs to Vinet of strictest right. He was a decided Christian, because he had examined and proved Christianity for himself. If he held that the heart has sound reasons for believing, and that moral obligation is an axiom, he held such opinions in common, not only with Pascal, but with Rousseau and with Kant. If he did not stop short at the theism of the two latter, it was because he found a harmony between the human soul and Christ; and it is upon this harmony, and not on the letter of the Church symbols, that he bases his conviction and his

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Christian apology. To the letter of those symbols he was never in bondage. How completely free he was from the shackles of an enforced orthodoxy, we see from his letters. "When a man thinks out his religion," he wrote, "he must think it out thoroughly. There may be difficulties which he does not see, but when he does see them he may not dismiss them without solving them, unless, indeed, their solution be at once impossible and useless."

Nevertheless, Vinet remained firmly attached to the great *credo* of the evangelical Reformation, which he so nobly defended alike against the negations and the superstitions of his day.

So unflinching a search after truth could not be carried on without much suffering by a conscience sensitive as Vinet's was. It always appeared to him a primary duty for a man to express his convictions. No one uttered more powerful protests than he against the social fictions which enfeeble men's beliefs, and especially against what he regarded as the most fatal of those fictions—a State religion. Against this he was ever an intrepid combatant. In his correspondence we trace the early development of this, which became the master-principle of his public life. It was under its impulse that he wrote his great book, "*La manifestation des convictions religieuses*," in which he sums up all the arguments for toleration and liberty of conscience. In relation to this subject also, he showed that he was one of the most liberal and large-minded thinkers of the age, and the jealous champion not only of liberty of thought, but of absolute freedom in the manifestation of opinion; and this freedom he considered to be as much infringed by privilege as by persecution. Hence we find in his letters the most delicate consideration for the perplexities and scruples of anxious souls exercised by doubts; and wise counsels for spiritual self-discipline, which are of abiding value to all seekers after truth.

We have said enough to indicate how full of interest these letters of Vinet's are. Let us now glance at some of his principal correspondents.

Many of Vinet's letters are addressed to the friends of his youth, and have therefore the interest of genuine outpourings of heart. He had also among his correspondents some of the most eminent of his countrymen. The Chateau of Coppet, the residence of the Duc de Broglie, stands just on the borders between France and Switzerland. There Vinet often stayed, and many memorials of these visits are to be traced in his correspondence. The old Duc de Broglie, in the evening of that noble public life which does equal honour to his country and to himself, felt the warmest sympathy for Vinet. Although still by conviction a Catholic of the old liberal Gallican school, he had breadth of spirit enough to rise above differences of creed. These could scarcely prove an obstacle to spiritual communion in the case of one whose wife had been so remarkable a type of moral purity and intellectual elevation. The Duke knew how high

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a rank Vinet had occupied in the esteem and regard of the Duchesse de Broglie, and how deeply he had deplored her premature death. Erskine, whose treatise the Duchesse de Broglie had translated, had been the link between her and Vinet, who was devotedly attached to the Scotch author, whose memory is so dear to all who knew him. It was also at the Chateau of Coppet that Vinet learned to know that remarkable Christian lady, Madame Auguste de Staël, who united the natural gifts of a brilliant intellect to all the graces of the Christian character. Carrying through life one of those heart sorrows which enrich rather than impoverish, giving a moral elevation, without narrowing or absorbing other affections, Madame de Staël lives enshrined in the tender respect of all who were privileged to know her. Such a life as hers is a pillar of strength to others, helping them to realise that the Christian ideal is no empty dream. The letters from her which are published in Vinet's correspondence show how well these two noble souls understood each other, and what a bond of exquisite sympathy there was between them. The Chateau of Coppet was doubtless very different in Vinet's time from what it was as the place of refuge for all the great thinkers of the day, the intellectual kingdom of the exiled Madame de Staël, whose brilliant powers of conversation made her the central star of a galaxy of genius and culture. Yet, no doubt the memory of the brilliant authoress of "Corinne" and of "L'Allemagne" still lingered about the Coppet which Vinet knew. Conversation there was still "a feast of reason and a flow of soul"; but there was no longer the excitement of a generous reaction against might triumphing over right. Social or religious philosophy occupied a more prominent place in the conversation; a gentler, graver influence made itself felt. Still, all that was of deepest interest to France found an echo there. Paris was never far away, though the eyes rested more often on the beauties of Alpine cloudland.

In the letters which Vinet had occasion to exchange with Catholics, he maintained energetically the principles of the Reformation, as opposed to Ultramontane superstitions, and to the ecclesiastical system, which he held in special abhorrence, as tending to stifle conscience, spontaneity, inquiry, and free will. Among Vinet's correspondents we find Victor Hugo, Chateaubriand, Béranger, and Sainte Beuve. With the exception of the last named, none of these illustrious writers knew Vinet personally. It was by reading his keen and comprehensive criticisms of their works in *Le Semeur* that they had come to recognise in him a master mind—one who neither sought to make capital for himself out of their fame, nor to derive matter for mere literary amusement; but who addressed himself to that which was most thoughtful, and consequently most original, in their writings. Those who know how prodigal of flattery Victor Hugo was to his admirers, will perceive from his two letters to Vinet how deep an impression had been produced on him by Vinet's study of his works, and by his criticism, which Hugo describes as

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so faithful, disinterested, and conscientious, at once so liberal and so severe, that it might well be made a model. "There are many things about it," he goes on to say, "which deserve to be pondered." He expresses a great desire to have a talk with the writer. "A little frank conversation would explain all. One word can sometimes throw light on a whole book. To know the man is to get the key to his work." It is clear that, dropping his usual complimentary manner, the poet meant to convey his true appreciation of a style of criticism as frank as it was sympathetic; for Vinet never flattered.

The letters from Chateaubriand inserted in this collection give one the idea that he fears to be taken too seriously by Vinet, who had led the discussion on to his Catholic theories. It was at the time when Chateaubriand was sceptical of everything. Disillusionised of the Legitimists, whose cause he had first so warmly upheld, and then done so much to overthrow, he was in no way unwilling to burn incense to victorious Democracy, and made many advances to it. The following passage from his correspondence with Vinet is very remarkable:—

"You have observed a tone of sadness running through my work. It is in no way the effect of age. I have lost none of my physical energy, none of my faculties. Unhappily, I am still far too young. But this sadness arises from the fact that (religious truth excepted) I have lost all faith on earth. I no longer believe in politics, in literature, in human affection: all this seems to me the most idle and mournful of chimeras."

But if he no longer believes in anything else, he still believes in his own eternal youth, and is pleased to speak of it. As to the religious truth which he excepts in a parenthesis, he believed in that less than he did in the integrity of his own physical and moral faculties; for if he had really had a mighty faith in things Divine, he would not have been so sceptical about humanity. It is always the romance writer, the man whose first aim is to please his contemporaries, who plays the same melancholy strain which has succeeded before, but plays it in a novel style adapted to the circumstances of the time. "I have believed, I have wept," he writes in his well-known letter to Fontanes on his first great work, *Le Génie du Christianisme*. "Why did he not begin by weeping?" asked S. Martin, the theosophist; "he would have believed more." His tears would not have been those of mere sentiment, called forth by the harmonies of nature and the beauty of cathedrals. Conscience makes a more powerful appeal than imagination to man's higher nature. Vinet's reply to Chateaubriand expresses thoughts like these in courteous guise. He speaks to him of a sadness which is something higher than mere melancholy, and out of which joy blossoms like a celestial flower on a crown of thorns.

"I do not ask your pardon," he says, "for my freedom of speech; it is not only my personal insignificance which puts me at my ease with you, but the consciousness of my intentions, and the assurance I have that you like to be spoken to frankly. It seems to me that it must be pleasant not to be always treated

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in an exceptional manner, but, occasionally at least, to realise your part in the infinite interests of our human brotherhood, and to feel that your humblest admirers are at the same time of your own flesh and blood."\*

The two letters from the poet Béranger are very charming. We should gladly reproduce them at length. They do not give at all the impression of false *bonhomie* with which he is often credited. They reveal the serious side of his nature. He was in reality far less of a sceptic than the great Catholic bard. He writes to Vinet :—

"In spite of the seriousness of which I am myself conscious in my deeper nature, I am often surprised to find my songs taken seriously, except those that are political. I am beginning, however, to get used to it. I am even beginning to feel that my name may outlive me a little while; alas! I cannot persuade myself that it will achieve immortality. If I could only think so, it would be a sweet dream for a poor old rhymers, who has never been able to turn his reputation to any account, and who in 1834 had so little idea that there was a future before him that he only asked, in acknowledgment for what he had done, and might yet do, a life-pension of 800 francs. This is just about what men get now-a-days for sending scandalous gossip to the newspapers which deal in such articles."

Entering more deeply into his feelings, Béranger goes on to express his philosophical convictions :—

"I am an anti-metaphysician," he says, "although I have lived, or perhaps because I have lived with metaphysicians. This has not, however, prevented me from attempting to soar as well as I may above this poor earth, in the songs of my old age, which will not see the light till I am dead. I have had enough of this world, which is no longer mine; but for all that, I can still laugh at many of its follies, and remain always sensible to the expressions of sympathy and goodwill which reach me."

Vinet replied :—

"With me to admire is to love; or rather, my admiration is in the first place affectionate; but one has not always the pleasure of finding the man in the poet, and the man above the poet. You have given me the golden key."

Vinet's great desire was to make the aged poet a sharer in his religious convictions: "I affectionately desire," he writes, "that my faith was also yours. This is my wish for every human being; how much more must I cherish it for those I love!"

Béranger appreciated the nobleness of this desire expressed with so much delicacy. He wrote again explaining more fully his own beliefs, which simply amounted to deism, while he at the same time professed a warm admiration for the Gospel, which he called "*a marvellous return to good sense.*" He complains that Lamennais had too much neglected the lessons to be drawn from its great teaching. He would like to have it read to the rich, who ignore it; and desires above all that it should have other representatives in France than men who, under the garb of religion, do all in their power to excite distrust in those who might else be ready to believe. This correspondence reflects all honour on the

\* Lettre 115.

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old poet, revealing the simplicity of a nature quite above all petty jealousy, and the sincerity of his somewhat straitened creed.

We shall not dwell at any length upon Sainte Beuve's letters to Vinet, because they have been published in his own correspondence. He himself describes the impression, never to be effaced, which the professor at Lausanne made upon him, when he heard him on his return from a hurried journey to France: "He was speaking," says Sainte Beuve, "of Bourdaloue and La Bruyère. In language close and connected, full of earnest thought and deep feeling, he unfolded the treasures of his moral nature. I was deeply impressed with a type of Christianity so real and spiritual. How great was the contrast with the pomps of the Vatican which I had witnessed but a week before! I never had a more pure and calm intellectual enjoyment, and never realised more strongly the moral element of thought."

Sainte Beuve always retained the same respectful sympathy for Vinet, even when he appeared to have become a confirmed Positivist. He had the opportunity of knowing him more intimately during the stay which he made at Lausanne in 1838, when in a course of public lectures he gave a sketch of his "History of Port Royal." Deeply impressed as he then was with the moral beauty of an austere life like those of St. Cyran and Pascal, he was still prepared to understand and to love Vinet, who seemed to him to be a survivor of that great Christian school, with broader views of truth. He did himself wrong when he said subsequently, that he had never been more than a curious inquirer about spiritual things. At this time of his life he was certainly in real sympathy with his heroes.

No one except Vinet has interpreted Pascal as Sainte Beuve has done. In his letters to his friend at Lausanne, we can mark the precise moment when the intellect absorbed the moral feeling, and when mere curious inquiry took the place of love for the truth itself: "Your letter has touched me, and I feel myself honoured by it," he wrote to Vinet on the 7th of October, 1841, "but I am always put to silence by your words of praise, feeling myself so unworthy of them, since I have come to the stage of a purely intellectual criticism, and am a sorrowful spectator of the death of my own heart. I am a dead man, and can look at myself as dead without being moved. Reason sheds its pale, cold light upon this place of the dead."

Sainte Beuve always remained true to Vinet, as is clear from his book on Chateaubriand, in which he places him in the first rank as a critic.

M. Schérer, who also knew and loved him, and who wrote an admirable notice of him after his death, held the same opinion. We find in Sainte Beuve's letters, which we have just quoted, this significant remark: "See how I am speaking right out to you as to a confessor!" This was just the kind of feeling Vinet called forth; he at once inspired confidence, and drew out sympathy on the highest themes. Hence the peculiar interest of the letters of our illustrious contemporaries who

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were his correspondents. They rose quite naturally, under his influence, to an elevation at which fictions disappear, and the soul deals honestly with itself, and expresses that which is best and noblest in its nature. This collection of Vinet's correspondence will thus form an important chapter in the psychological history of the 19th century. A place of honour must always be given to the great and noble mind of Vinet, who only lived for truth, utterly disdaining to seek glory for himself,—who was as firm in his Christian convictions as he was full of tenderness for the sufferings of humanity, especially for those of a troubled conscience and a mind agitated by doubt, and who has thus left behind him the highest type of a liberal and large-minded Christian.

E. DE PRESSENSÉ.

## SOCIAL PRAYER—THE CHURCH'S WEAK POINT.

WHO can estimate the height of spiritual privilege to which the Head of the Church has raised the Evangelical Churches in Great Britain and America? What limit could be set to their power for good, if it were only exerted as it might be, and as her great Head requires? Can we doubt that the Church, in the position in which she now stands, has sufficient machinery, if that were only in right working order, and driven by the full force of the Holy Spirit, to accomplish, ere many generations were passed, the grand end of her mission, the subjugation of the whole world to Christ? When had she ever anything like the large number of earnest workers, men and women, who have yielded themselves to Christ, and are doing service for Him? When at any period of her history could she present such an army of organised force? So many great organisations, with all the needed appliances for preaching the Gospel, instructing and edifying believers, teaching the young, and bringing in the outcast? When were the ministers of the Gospel more thoroughly trained, and, on the whole, in a better state of equipment for their great work? When were our colleges ever filled with men of higher ability and attainments? If there never was a time when science was so fertile in her discoveries, we never were better supplied in our theological halls with men to teach her highest lessons, and use them in the service of evangelical Christianity. Nor was there ever a time when the press did more for Christ, or directed sharper or more polished shafts at the hearts and consciences of men.

And yet, notwithstanding the exalted position to which the Church has been raised; notwithstanding her immense resources and high moral standing, she is exhibiting no little weakness in carrying on her work, and in some departments, and these lying nearest her own borders, she is unquestionably chargeable with great failures and omissions.

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The most serious feature of the case is that at home the Churches are barely keeping pace with the increase of population. A large proportion of our working classes have long been estranged from the house of God, and virtually have been living in a state of semi-heathenism. That class increases nearly in the same ratio as the general population—in some great centres there can be no doubt it is increasing even more rapidly—yet no appreciable inroad is made upon it by the Churches. Sometimes a revival occurs here and there, and from evangelistic work at given points the mass of iniquity is affected a little; but the change is so small as scarcely to be felt. The mighty mass moves on, year after year, as heedless of God and His glory, and as little minding the great salvation as if Jesus had never died to save the world. And this state of matters is worst where we should hope that the case would be different,—in our great cities, side by side with our largest and most influential Churches, with all their organisations and many of our most gifted and learned ministers. The census lately taken by several newspapers in England and in Scotland of the number of persons attending places of worship in several of our cities and towns reveals a state of matters many degrees worse than had been generally believed. In Newcastle-on-Tyne, the sad fact was discovered that matters had got worse in thirty years by twenty-five per cent., and in Liverpool, in twenty-eight years the Church attendance was about fifty per cent. less. According to these returns, one in seven attend the house of God in Newcastle, and one in nine in Liverpool. So far as the newspaper census work has proceeded, these seem to be the worst instances; but some others are only a few degrees better. And the picture is certainly very dark. We have been contenting ourselves with the belief that the lapsed masses were at least not increasing. This was bad enough, but it has been a grievous mistake.

And it is not the working-classes only who absent themselves from the worship of the only living and true God. The number of non-church goers is largely supplemented from the middle and upper classes, and we fear in an ever-increasing ratio. Materialism and scepticism are more extensive than we are inclined to allow.

It cannot be otherwise, if the many powerful influences fitted to do harm are not more efficiently met. The press, though used partly in the service of Christianity, is also employed extensively against her. What tongue can tell the havoc inflicted on our youth, as well as on hosts of our older people, by much of our light literature? Our school-children neglect their lessons and their sleep, and the message-boy and the servant-girl forget their work while reading the stories of the cheap journals, many of which are unfit for decent eyes; while our young men and maidens of the educated classes fritter away the golden opportunities of youth, and prepare themselves for lives of frivolity and failure. And what a sad pity that the daily newspaper, risen during the last quarter of a century to such immense influence, should be almost wholly

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under the control of a worldly spirit, and that in so many cases its great power should be used against evangelical Christianity. How much of the prevailing scepticism is fostered by some of the most influential of our daily journals! Their weekly issues, too, with the sensational story, as many of our city missionaries can testify, form the staple reading of multitudes of our labouring population and others on the Lord's day. In fact, we might assert without fear of contradiction, that amongst the workmen in our cities a much larger number read newspapers on that sacred day than those who go to church and listen to the preaching of God's Word.

And what a sad blot on our civilisation, and testimony to the failure of our Christian appliances is the intemperance rampant in these Christian lands! Whatever view we may take of it, it wrings from the Christian heart the prophet's wail: "Oh that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." Would such monster evils as these, and many others which must occur to every Christian reader, continue, and in many cases increase, if the Church were more true to her colours, and made better use of her power? Does the existence of those evils not reveal a sad lack of power in our Christian ordinances? Would not the results of the multifarious labours of the Church be very different but for fatal weakness at some vital point? It is an abnormal state of things for iniquity to increase and flourish side by side with the Gospel, and what ought to be its exponent—the lives of Christians. Those monster evils must yield to the preaching of the Gospel, if that is accompanied by faithful living and earnest prayers on the part of God's people; for the Church is designed to be "a sharp threshing instrument, having teeth by which she can thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and make the hills as chaff."

If, therefore, there is failure, we are bound to inquire, What is the cause? Why this abnormal state of things? For as truly as the cause of the hurricane which beat on the troubled ship on its way from Joppa to Tarshish lay with God's disobedient prophet, so may we expect judgment to begin at the house of God if these great evils continue among us.

It is cheering to the Christian to cast his thoughts on the Lord's day over the length and breadth of the land, and think of the vast array of earnest worshippers joining in the chorus of praise to God, and of the vast amount of precious truth communicated from thousands of pulpits. But his thoughts are solemnised when he reflects that each congregation of "saints and faithful brethren" is surrounded more or less by men, women, and children, living according to the course of this world, without hope and without God in the world. The chief business of each congregation ought to be to save the ungodly around them; while by nothing is the sanctification of each disciple, through infinite wisdom, promoted so much as by his joining in the work of saving the

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outcast. This is now recognised to a great extent by all true Christian people. And therefore most of our congregations, especially in towns, have their organisation of Sabbath schools, missionary stations one or more, a system of tract distribution, &c. And when we reflect on the great amount of zeal and real worth in this organisation, it does appear marvellous that the Churches at their annual assemblies should have to mourn over a state of stagnation, or even retrogression. Can it be doubted that a lack of spiritual power in the agents, from the pastor downwards, has much to do with this result?

In many ways is this deficiency found, but in none more than in the matter of prayer. Without the Holy Spirit all our efforts are vain; they are mere beating of the air. Prayer is the hand stretched out to take hold on the power of the Holy Ghost. That Divine Agent is promised in answer to prayer; and when the Holy Ghost is given, Christian people are edified by the Word, read or preached, and sinners are converted. If, therefore, we fail in prayer, and if the failure is great and general, we need not expect God's work to go on, or His cause to be promoted. Somewhat close observation, extending over many years, in connection both with Church and other evangelistic work, leads us to the conclusion that the failure is both great and general. We are strongly impressed with the fact that many Christian people are failing to realise their great responsibility in the matter of prayer; that very many, even of the true people of God, appear to have no very distinct idea of the place it occupies in God's system of means; and hence they fail to use it for helping on God's cause. We believe that many good men in all the Churches, both in Britain and America, share our conviction that at no point is the Church weaker than in the work of prayer; that her failure to realise the futility of man's efforts without the power of the Holy Ghost, and her failure in consequence to take hold on that power, is very real. The Church is working much, but praying little. She is making much of the power of man, of effort by the pen and by the voice, preaching and writing, thinking and planning, adopting new modes and entering upon new departures—everything that man can think and that man can do; but in regard to prayer, men seem quite disinclined to it—it is pushed into a corner.

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to say to what extent secret prayer and family prayer are practised; but in the state of high pressure under which men in all ranks move on in these days, the temptations to neglect both are obviously numerous. But we have the opportunity of gauging, with some approach to correctness, the extent to which *social* prayer is practised and enjoyed; and this, we think, reveals a state of matters which goes far to explain the weakness we deplore.

The primitive Christians made a business of social prayer. By it they brought down the power of the Spirit that produced the great revival of Pentecost; and the records of the other triumphs of the

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Gospel contained in the Divine Word show that the victories were achieved by the power of united prayer.

The last half-century has witnessed the rise and growth of the weekly prayer meeting amongst the Presbyterian Churches, and it is an institution that has effected great good. But for that meeting, and the opportunity of joining in the public prayers of the sanctuary, the members of the Churches have no facilities for social prayer. And surely it is intended that an integral part of the public prayers in the sanctuary should be for the Lord's blessing on the various means employed, including the preaching of the Word, and that this should be also the main business of the prayer meeting. Who can doubt that if this were gone about with earnestness and in faith we should have precious results?

But what do we find almost universally amongst the Churches? The greatest possible difficulty in keeping up the prayer meeting, so much so that ministers have thought it necessary to convert it into a lecture or preaching meeting. A prayer meeting, strictly so called, occupied exclusively or chiefly with prayer and praise and reading the Word of God, is very rare among us. The congregation meets twice on the Lord's day, and the minister preaches for the edification of the Christian people and the conversion of sinners. If these services were improved, the people should not require the minister to prepare a third sermon or lecture in the week. On the contrary, they would feel that it was their privilege and duty to come to the weekly prayer meeting, not to hear, not to be edified, but to pray. Many ministers find that they cannot get the people to attend if the meeting is exclusively or chiefly for prayer, and hence they resort to the lecture or some literary or scientific attraction. Members of Churches will come out to listen to the minister rather than to pray. And even then, with all its attractions in the way of lecturing or preaching, the weekly meeting is miserably attended. Let a popular lecturer come to a church, and the congregation will send its hundreds or thousands for the tens of the prayer meeting.

This state of matters is not confined to the pew. Supplication for God's blessing does not always form a large part of the prayers of the congregation as led from the pulpit. It seems to be becoming more and more the practice to use the prayers of the sanctuary as devotional exercises in which we express adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication on behalf of the individual Christian, &c., while but a fragment of the prayers is for God's blessing on the work of the Church. One is sometimes constrained to doubt if prayer has any other object than that known as the reflex influence. Those who lead our prayers seem afraid to ask from God with the freeness and confidence with which we are encouraged in Scripture to go to God and ask Him for blessings.

At any rate, whatever is the cause, we are not having, except perhaps in rare cases, any well sustained and continuous calling upon God, either in the sanctuary or at the prayer meeting, for the outpour-

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ing of the Holy Spirit. We seem in a great measure contented with things as they are. If the Church's organisation is kept in good order; if the minister preaches well and the audiences are large; if the annual balance-sheet shows a goodly array of subscriptions and collections for the work at home and abroad—there is at the annual soiree a chorus of congratulation. There may be a few names added to the membership during the year, or a few subtracted, but on the whole the work has been maintained, and there is cause for thanksgiving. And yet the mighty mass of ungodliness all around, the conversion of which is one of the great objects for which the congregation exists, has been literally untouched.

Would that such a picture were applicable to one here and there only of our evangelical congregations! The utmost stretch of charity does not warrant the hope; on the contrary, we fear that, with no very extensive variations, the picture applies to the great majority of congregations of all, or nearly all, the evangelical denominations.

And if so, it does seem wonderful and unaccountable that such a state of things can exist after all we have seen of the Lord's doings in the Church and among the nations in these our times. We fear the Churches have too much worldly prosperity. One thing is certain—the great Head will not permit a state of stagnation to continue. Either we must repent, or the rod must be applied to us.

This lack of prayer is seen also in connection with our extra-religious movements. During the excitement of a revival the prayer meetings get a stimulus, and often new ones are started. The Union daily prayer meetings in our large cities are a most interesting and encouraging sign of the times, and have doubtless accomplished much good. Had they done no more than bring together the different members of Christ's fold, and thereby promote union amongst the disciples of Christ, they would have been worth all the time and labour bestowed on them. But they have effected much more in stirring up and keeping alive the flame of Divine love in many Christian workers, and encouraging them to labour in the Master's service. It would be difficult to estimate the amount of blessing already brought down on this sin-stricken world through the prayers offered up at these noon meetings.

Now, where should we expect to find an atmosphere of prayer if not at such assemblies? They are ostensibly prayer meetings, and the *élite* of the Christian people of the cities, lay and clerical, support them. The intelligence communicated is often of a kind greatly to encourage, and excite to prayer. The requests for prayer are numerous and urgent, and were the true spirit of prayer always present, the prayers of the meeting would be intensely important, varied, and interesting, and would afford abundant material for occupying the great part of the hour in "prayer and supplication with thanksgiving." But instead of this, we find the same difficulty here as in the congregational prayer meetings. Without the accessories of preaching or addressing,

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there is no possibility of keeping the meetings together. No one will accuse us of a carping or criticising spirit in regard to these meetings, for they have our warmest sympathy, and from them we look for the highest results; but we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that most of those in Britain, and also in America, have to a great extent become exhortation or preaching meetings rather than prayer meetings, and that their power for good has in consequence immeasurably lessened. More forcibly perhaps than any other circumstance, this has made plain to our minds the sad fact that the Christian people of these times, taken as a whole, are not in a mood for prayer; that whatever they are eager in or devoted to, it is not the work of prayer, the blessed exercise of communion with God. Are our premises called in question? We cannot believe that any intelligent observer of the facts will venture to do so.

Within a radius of a few miles from each of these daily meetings there are, perhaps, hundreds of thousands of men and women, made after the image of God, who are despising the great salvation, and never entering a church door. Within the same space, hundreds of churches are half empty, and ministers are spending their strength apparently for nought and in vain. What resource have we under such circumstances but to cry mightily to God? And when we meet, how can we so ignore these solemn facts as to have studied addresses for the edification of the few Christian persons present, taking the place of earnest, importunate prayers for the outpouring of God's Spirit in the conversion of sinners?

We write the results of personal observation amongst the prayer meetings in Great Britain. We believe our American brethren, who have hitherto been so much in advance of us, are now very similarly situated. One of the oldest and most influential of the religious newspapers of New York in a late number gives us some idea how matters stand there in the few following forcible sentences:—

"I ask any attendant upon the average so-called prayer meeting if it is in reality what its name implies? Is it a prayer meeting? Do the people go to these meetings to hear the Church pray, and to pray with it?

"There may be some who go with the most vague and indefinite notion, but the majority of attendants seem to go there to hear a homily or exposition. They do not even go to join in the hymns. . . . The old-time prayer meeting, except in some few instances, has gradually disappeared. . . . It has gone from us. We cannot say when it went. Little by little it gathered up its robes and stole softly away. We have the room where it used to be. We have all the appliances in use when it was among us. And we try once a-week to work them; but the majestic figure of the old-time prayer meeting is not with us—not even his skeleton; but in his stead we have a group of quiet listeners to the music of the instrument, the voices of a half-dozen singers, the reading of a chapter of the Bible, its exposition—none too spirited, for the dreamy attitude of the listeners acts as a soporific on the speaker—and possibly a prayer or two. . . .

"One pastor, to my knowledge, ceased reading the notice of the prayer meeting from the desk, for the reason that the church held none, and gave notice of a week-day service instead, which it really was. Another pastor read the notice

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of the prayer meeting with an explanation that it was a misnomer, and ought to be called a week-day meeting.

"Will the Church meet once a-week for prayer?"

We have had revealed to us for some time past the existence of a widespread scepticism in Protestant as well as in other countries; are there not also evidences in abundance of the existence in the Church of a vast amount of unbelief in the great effective Agent in all Christian work, the Third Person of the Godhead? The two are more closely connected than is always allowed. Christians lose their faith in the power of the Holy Ghost, and then their work is weak. All their learning and erudition, all their earnestness and eloquence are only beating the air when they attempt to convert the heart diseased by sin; and when the truth is not preached under the power of the Holy Ghost, the heart listening is hardened. The truth, instead of saving the soul, becomes a savour of death unto death to it. And if the Church is in an unspiritual state, what more fruitful soil for indifferentism and infidelity?

And it is evident that if there is a widespread unbelief in the necessity of the Spirit's power for blessing the Word to the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints,—or what amounts to about the same thing, nothing more than a theoretical assent to the doctrine, without a deep-rooted conviction of its reality, and a constant dependence on it in all spiritual work,—*that* must constitute a weak point in the work of the Churches. And there arises a loud call to all who love Zion, and seek her prosperity, and have faith in her ultimate triumph, to labour earnestly to have it remedied.

That weak point, we believe, is hindering the smooth and efficient working of the whole machinery. Get that remedied and every department of the mighty organisation would exhibit new life. To remedy that, however, is no light affair. It is the serious question of motive power. We think of the slow and feeble work of the hand or the horse, and then of the mighty revolution effected by the invention of James Watt, and the grand achievements of steam-power which enter into the experience of our every-day life, and we wonder how our forefathers could have got on without it. In the spiritual domain we have a power vastly more important than steam with which to ply our high and holy calling. For the serious and difficult work in which we are engaged we need it all. And yet we dispense with it and revert to the feeble one, which in material things our forefathers were obliged to use for want of a better—like the power of the hand or the horse—for our spiritual efforts and their results can be compared to nothing more fitting. It might not be serious if these results were only of a negative kind; but when we think of our failure to take hold on God's strength as hindering the progress of Christ's kingdom in the world, bolstering up the kingdom of darkness, and preventing the precious Gospel from reaching the unsaved masses, and continuing and perpetuating the

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degraded mass of heathenism with which our large towns abound, its consequences are too awful to contemplate, and we humbly submit that it demands the most serious and immediate attention of ministers of the Gospel, of all office-bearers in our Churches, and of all our earnest Christian people.

Can anything more urgently demand the attention of the leaders of our Churches? What wonderful results might not be expected from the position of power and influence to which the Head of the Church has exalted them! But at a vital point the organisation is weak and inefficient. They are overlooking the oiling of the mighty machinery, and its immense power is wasted. And these evils continue and increase. The multifarious agencies of the Churches scarcely affect them. The masses are perishing, God's name is dishonoured, iniquity abounds, God's Gospel is despised because the Churches are spiritually weak. They are weak because they work but do not pray. They believe in reason or persuasion, in talk or eloquence, but not enough in the power of the Holy Ghost; hence ungodliness and worldliness triumph, and the cause of Jesus languishes and seems ready to die.

A. O. D.

## THE GREAT POETS OF AMERICA.

## FIRST PAPER.—LONGFELLOW.

**I**N a book of extracts which I kept when a lad, were two American poems that used to be great favourites in the small literary circle to which I then belonged. The poems were by the late William Cullen Bryant,—his well-known "Thanatopsis" and "Forest Hymn."

There was a great fascination for us in both. Possibly the strange name of the first had just a little to do with our admiration of it. But the subject itself was fascinating. There are four or five years of a young student's life in which he likes to speculate about death. And the philosophic way in which the poet invites us in that poem to be comforted, and the glamour he casts over the great change, helped to show us that there were aspects of it of which we, at least, had never dreamed. I remember that we considered the closing lines the finest—

"So live that when thy summons comes to join  
The innumerable caravan that moves  
To that mysterious realm where each shall take  
His chamber in the silent halls of death,  
Thou go not, like the quarry slave at night,  
Scourged to his dungeon, but sustained and soothed  
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave  
Like one that draws the drapery of his couch  
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

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The "Forest Hymn" was a still greater favourite. The old Druid blood in us seemed to respond to the awe with which the poet invested his forest solitudes. And many a time as we took our walks together in the park of the college and by the river-side, the following lines were chanted :—

"The groves were God's first temples. Ere man learned  
To hew the shaft and lay the architrave,  
And spread the roof above them, ere he framed  
The lofty vault, to gather and roll back  
The sound of anthems: in the darkling wood  
Amid the cool and silence, he knelt down  
And offered to the Mightiest solemn thanks  
And supplication."

I cannot honestly say that I retain my early estimate of these poems. Yet it was with a resentment that had a mixture of the personal in it that, some years ago, I found them referred to in one of the London Quarterlies in a depreciatory way, to illustrate the assertion that American poetry was little more than an echo of the poetry of England.

Hardly any assertion could be more unjust. But it raises a very interesting question. No doubt poetry ought to be the expression of the life of its native land. It should come forth glowing in the colours of its home. That is one great charm in the poetry of Shakespeare and Wordsworth, of Burns and Scott. English life in the former, Scottish life in the latter, are as visible as the thoughts they express. But let us for a moment consider what that life is, which, to be native, American poetry ought to express. It is the life that looks back to the Pilgrim Fathers, and has still fond yearnings toward the old home they had to leave. It is the life that had to unlearn many of the hard thoughts of God and His ways, which the pilgrims brought with them from Puritan England; the life which had to conquer the swamps and the forests, to fight with the bears and the rattlesnakes, to live next neighbour to the Red Indian, and find itself unwittingly, innocently, encumbered with negro slavery; the life that drank in the fierce thought of the French Revolution, and resented English injustice, and worked out an independent nationality for itself; the life which had to face the difficult problem of the abolition of slavery, and that found on its path the still more difficult problem of civil war; the life that went through that terrible agony, and emerged from it chastened, purified, and exalted, and which at this moment is spreading itself over the prairies and valleys of a continent greater than Europe, planting townships and opening up pasture and wheat-lands, forming new centres of commerce, and spreading over the civilised nations of the earth a moral and political influence not second to our own. This is the immense, complex life which American poetry has had, and still has, to express. And if here and there some of its strains re-echo those of the old country, this is not only not to be made a reproach, but is in the nature of the case inevitable, since the life of the old country is still flowing in the veins of the

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new, and Shakespeare and Burns, Milton and Scott, belong to the Americans as much as to ourselves.

The reviewer's assertion was, however, although only in an oblique sort of way, true of the poet who, next after Bryant, arrested attention in this country. Not only is Edgar Allan Poe not American, but it would be necessary to find a country not on the world's map at all before we could say whence his poetry drew its sap. Can any one tell where the land is whose shadow falls on us in the ballad of "Ulalume"?—

"It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,  
In the misty mid-region of Weir,  
It was down by the dark tarn of Auber,  
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir."

The impression made by "The Raven," when first published, on a judge so competent as Mrs. Browning is a cherished memory among the admirers of Poe. "This weird writing," she said, "this power *which is felt*, has produced a sensation here in England. I hear of persons who are haunted by the 'Nevermore,' and an acquaintance of mine who has a bust of Pallas cannot bear to look at it in the twilight."

And who that has ever read the poem can wonder at such an impression? I do not pretend to have the key to its meaning. The raven that figured in it is not a raven of this world, but belongs to that weird province in the realms of imagination which Poe created for himself. And in fact, that seems to be the hint thrown out by the author himself at the close of the poem—

"And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting  
On the pallid bust of Pallas, just above my chamber door;  
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon that is dreaming,  
And the lamplight o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor,  
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor  
Shall be lifted nevermore."

But there was better stuff in Poe than weird ravens and ballads of Ulalume. "Annabel Lee" and "The Bells" are set in conceptions of life which manifest real human sympathies; and like his other poems, they bear witness to his unequalled gift of rhythm. In that he was a master. "Annabel Lee" is music itself; and it has the swing and rhythm of ballad poetry at its best:—

"It was many and many a year ago,  
In a kingdom by the sea,  
That a maiden there lived, whom you may know  
By the name of Annabel Lee.  
And this maiden she lived with no other thought  
Than to love and be loved by me."

In Gill's interesting life of Poe, we learn that the song of "The Bells" developed from a tiny poem of eighteen lines to its present dimensions. No one who has ever heard it read would willingly miss a line from its

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perfected form. What dash, what movement, what variety of melodies are in it ! It is like a thing of life. And as it advances along the principal stages of our human pilgrimage, we seem to hear the bells ringing overhead. Poetry like Poe's, however, cannot easily be classed. It is, at any rate, not typical of race or nation, but stands by itself, like Mrs. Radcliffe's romances and his own prose tales.

But to learn the qualities of real American poetry, we must study it in the works of its chiefs. And of these, for the present, it will be sufficient to name Longfellow, Whittier, and Lowell. Longfellow and Lowell are equipped scholars, not inferior to the best in England ; and Whittier is a reader of the widest range. Longfellow, early in his life, came under the influence of the Continental poetry of Europe, of Spain and Germany especially, and his first book had a large admixture of translation. But in the poems which followed, and in the poetry of all the three I have named, after they have fairly warmed to their work as poets, the stuff and substance are, in the best sense, native and national. American woods flush for us, in their poetry, into the golden splendour of the Indian summer ; American birds call to us morning and evening ; the streams that make music in their songs are American streams ; and the winds that blow upon our faces come from the New England seaboard, and are travelling to the wheatfields of the West and the mines of Colorado and California.

In one thing, to the credit of all the three, the nationality of these poets rose to a glorious height. When to speak for the slave was to subject themselves to obloquy, they sang in no uncertain strain. The slave songs of Longfellow are an eternal honour to him, and to the literature to which they belong. They do not need to be quoted now. They are household familiars. And I was delighted, not long ago, when attending a school examination, to find that they had come into the reading books of our children.

Longfellow will always be known by his lyrical poems. But that implies no depreciation of his other works. "The Golden Legend," "The Courtship of Miles Standish," "Hiawatha," and "Evangeline," are as certain to live as anything in English poetry. All know the beautiful story of "The Golden Legend." It is the story of a Count who had an illness, which could only be cured if the life of another were poured out for his. A humble girl, the daughter of one of his peasants, counts it an honour to give her young life for her chief. And love springs up in the breast of the sick Count, and in the wake of love, health returns ; and the beautiful and queen-like peasant gives her life for his by becoming his wife.

The quality which chiefly underlies the poetry of Longfellow is pathos. Life has not presented itself to him on its sunny but its sad side. The sad ending of "Excelsior" is characteristic—

"A traveller, by the faithful hound,  
Half-buried in the snow was found,

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Still grasping in his hand of ice  
That banner with the strange device,  
Excelsior !"

That was a hard ending for one who had set out to reach the highest that life could yield. But the same strain meets us in the majority of his poems. In the "Psalm of Life," in "The Reaper Death," in the little touch, so tender and affecting in "The Village Blacksmith" where the voice of his daughter, singing in the choir, recalls the voice of the dead mother ; and in the fine poem on the "Fire of Drift-wood." How vividly, in this last-named poem, the circumstances which suggested it, and the thoughts that rose out of them, present themselves to the mind. The company seated before the fire,—the flames leaping from the burning timbers of the stranded ships,—the thoughts going seaward to ships dismasted and hailed that sent no answer back again. And then—

"The windows, rattling in their frames,—  
The ocean, roaring up the beach,—  
The gusty blast,—the bickering flames,—  
All mingled vaguely in our speech ;  
Until they made themselves a part  
Of fancies floating through the brain,—  
The long-lost ventures of the heart,  
That send no answers back again.  
O flames that glowed ! O hearts that yearned !  
They were, alas ! too much akin.  
The drift-wood fire without that burned,  
The thoughts that burned and glowed within."

It is this same view of life that moves us all as we read "Evangeline." Who has not read "Evangeline"? To whom can it be a necessity that we should do more than refer to the outline of the pathetic story? In the old settlements of the French in North America, in the village of Grand Pré, in Acadia, lived Evangeline, daughter of the wealthiest farmer, and in the same place Gabriel, son of Basil, the blacksmith. They are lovers. They are engaged. They are about to be married. On the very eve of their expected happiness arrives an order from England to scatter the entire population, and deport them to distant settlements. The cruel order is enforced and carried out by ships of war. And in the confusion, Gabriel and Evangeline are taken in different vessels,—their paths sunder, and are only to meet again in the shadow of death.

When weary years had passed, Evangeline is still searching for her lost Gabriel—

"Sometimes a rumour, a hearsay, an inarticulate whisper  
Came with its airy hand to point and beckon her forward ;"

Sometimes she spake with those who had seen her beloved and known him ; but it was long ago, in some place far off or forgotten.

"'Gabriel Lajeunesse !' said they ; 'oh, yes, we have seen him.  
He was with Basil, the blacksmith, and both have gone to the prairies!'"

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In her weary search, helped by Father Felician, the priest, they go up one of the great rivers of the Golden Coast, and far away, amid the dense foliage, in the profound solitude, there was a moment when the poor seeker was on the very margin of success. As Evangeline's boat went up, Gabriel's was coming down. Yes; Gabriel himself, searching also, "weary with waiting, unhappy and restless," passed the very spot where, behind the palmetto screen, Evangeline and her companions were sleeping for the night. But they were not to meet there. She came to his father's, and learned that he must have passed her. And the years went on, and hope died within her. And she gave herself to God to be a visitor and nurse of the sick. It was in an hospital where at last her long search came to an end. One day, passing from bed to bed, she saw Gabriel himself, and she sent forth a piercing cry:

"On the pallet before her was stretched the form of an old man.  
Long, and thin, and grey were the locks that shaded his temples;  
But, as he lay in the morning light, his face for a moment  
Seemed to assume once more the forms of its earlier manhood.

Then through those realms of shade, in multiplied reverberations,  
Heard he that cry of pain, and through the hush that succeeded  
Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and saint-like,  
'Gabriel! O my beloved!' and died away into silence.

Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline, kneeling beside him,  
Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her bosom.  
Sweet was the light of his eyes; but it suddenly sank into darkness,  
As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a casement."

It is a noble close to this great poem, when the poet, rising on the wings of the very melody of pathos, says:—

"Still stands the forest primeval; but far away from its shadow,  
Side by side, in their nameless graves, the lovers are sleeping.  
Under the humble walls of the little Catholic churchyard,  
In the heart of the city, they lie, unknown and unnoticed.  
Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them,  
Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at rest and for ever;  
Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no longer are busy;  
Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have ceased from their labours;  
Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have completed their journey!"

"Hiawatha" is in every sense a splendid poem. In one respect it was a daring experiment. As in "Evangeline," there is rhythm but not rhyme. But never experiment succeeded better. The poem leaped into universal popularity, which it still sustains. As Professor Nichol says: "One never tires of the rhythm. Although the notes are few, they are mingled as skilfully as the notes of the lark's song." Just listen to this short passage from the description of Hiawatha's childhood:—

"At the door on summer evenings  
Sat the little Hiawatha;

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Heard the whisperings of the pine-trees,  
 Heard the lapping of the water,  
 Sounds of music, words of wonder ;  
 ' Minne-wawa ! ' said the pine-trees,  
 ' Mudway-aushka ! ' said the water.

Then the little Hiawatha  
 Learned of every bird its language,  
 Learned their names and all their secrets,  
 How they built their nests in summer,  
 Where they hid themselves in winter,  
 Talked with them whene'er he met them,  
 Called them ' Hiawatha's Chickens.'

Of all beasts he learned the language,  
 Learned their names and all their secrets,  
 How the beavers built their lodges,  
 Where the squirrels hid their acorns,  
 How the reindeer ran so swiftly,  
 Why the rabbit was so timid,  
 Talked with them whene'er he met them,  
 Called them ' Hiawatha's Brothers.' "

Hiawatha in some respects is Longfellow's greatest poem. The subject is great. It is the story of civilisation. And in a wonderfully skilful way he has seized the old Indian legend of the hero Hiawatha, and twined the great cord of facts around his life. His birth, his boyhood, his fishing, his hunting, his courtship, marriage, agriculture, writing, art, his skill in government, at last his reception of a new religion, are all worked in as only a master could do.

I must not venture to quote any of the great passages which describe the developments of civilisation. But here is a little snatch from the story of his courtship, which has a more human interest for us all. He had once before seen the maiden, who was the daughter of the arrow-maker to the Dacotahs. And in spite of warnings and remonstrances from his own people for seeking a wife outside of his own tribe, he sets out to ask her. It is a long journey. As he comes near the village, he shoots a deer for a present, puts it on his shoulder, and draws near. And this is what awaited him :—

" At the doorway of his wigwam  
 Sat the ancient Arrow-maker  
 In the land of the Dacotahs,  
 Making arrow-heads of jasper. . . .  
 At his side, in all her beauty,  
 Sat the lovely Minnehaha,  
 Sat his daughter, Laughing Water,  
 Plaiting mats of flags and rushes ;  
 Of the past the old man's thoughts were,  
 And the maiden's of the future.  
 He was thinking"—

But we may pass over what *he* was thinking.

" *She* was thinking of a hunter,  
 From another tribe and country,

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Young and tall and very handsome,  
 Who one morning, in the spring-time,  
 Came to buy her father's arrows,  
 Sat and rested in the wigwam,  
 Lingered long about the doorway,  
 Looking back as he departed.  
 She had heard her father praise him,  
 Praise his courage and his wisdom ;  
 Would he come again for arrows  
 To the Falls of Minnehaha ?  
 On the mat her hands lay idle,  
 And her eyes were very dreamy.  
 Through their thoughts they heard a footstep,  
 Heard a rustling in the branches,  
 And with glowing cheek and forehead,  
 With the deer upon his shoulders,  
 Suddenly from out the woodlands  
 Hiawatha stood before them.

At the feet of Laughing Water  
 Hiawatha laid his burden,  
 Threw the red deer from his shoulders ;  
 And the maiden looked up at him,  
 Looked up from her mat of rushes,  
 Said with gentle look and accent,  
 'You are welcome, Hiawatha !'

A great poem, I repeat. Yet I find in the heart of it the same chord of pathos which I have pointed out in his other poems. It is impossible, when you come to the close of the poem, to avoid the feeling that the civilisation whose story has been told, can never be a reality for Hiawatha's race. In the last glimpses we have of the old hero, he is welcoming the white man to the pasture-fields of his people, and opening his heart to the white man's religion. There will be civilisation among men, but, one seems to be taught, not for the men of the red skin.

Hiawatha himself, like Arthur in the English legend, passes away. He bids farewell to Nocomis, his old nurse, to the warriors and the young men of his village, bids them attend to the teaching of the new guests, then—

"Turned and waved his hand at parting ;  
 On the clear and luminous water  
 Launched his birch canoe for sailing  
 From the pebbles of the margin,  
 Shoved it forth into the water ;  
 Whispered to it, 'Westward, westward !'  
 And with speed it darted forward.  
 And the evening sun descending  
 Set the clouds on fire with redness,  
 Burned the broad sky, like a prairie,  
 Left upon the level water  
 One long track and trail of splendour,  
 Down whose stream, as down a river,  
 Westward, westward Hiawatha  
 Sailed into the fiery sunset,

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Sailed into the purple vapour,  
Sailed into the dusk of evening."

That is the end. It is there the pathos comes out. This hero of the red-skins; this civiliser of the race—it is into the sunset, into the purple vapour, into the dusk of evening he sails.

It is the sad story of "Excelsior" over again.

There is one poem where the pathetic element escapes by a side issue, so to speak. It is the delightful poem—told in the same rhythm as "Evangeline"—of "The Courtship of Miles Standish." But the pathos is present all through. Miles Standish, the captain of Plymouth, whose weapons and armour are bright and shining because he attends to them himself, who admires Caesar because he attended personally to all his tasks, who yet, in a strange contradiction to the rest of his life, sends his young friend, John Alden, a student, a speaker, to plead for him with Priscilla, the Puritan maiden. It was a heavy task for John Alden, for he loved Priscilla himself; a disastrous arrangement for Miles, for the maiden said to John, "Why don't you speak for yourself, John Alden?" Things come out well for those two; but the old captain has to go out, like Hiawatha, "into the purple vapour, into the dusk of evening."

As I write these words, the shadow that waits on us all has fallen on the poet's home—Longfellow is dead. The interest that centred for so many years on that house in Harvard where he lived will now pass into a new form. Strangers will come from far to visit his haunts. They will enter the room in which he studied. They will pace the walks that he loved. They will seek and not find him there. But in the noble poems he has bequeathed to the English-speaking race he still paces his favourite paths, he receives his visitors with outstretched hands as before, and it is still his voice, with its pathetic undertone, we hear as he comforts us in our sorrow:—

"Be still, sad heart! and cease repining;  
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;  
Thy fate is the common fate of all,  
Into each life some rain must fall,  
Some days must be dark and dreary."

A. MACLEOD.

## THE THRESHOLD OF THE MINISTRY.\*

I PROPOSE on this occasion to address myself specially to students who have concluded their studies for the ministry, and who now stand on the threshold of the office for which they have made so long preparation. The fact that every session has a class in this position

\* An Address delivered to the Students of the New College, Edinburgh, at the close of Session 1881-82, published at the request of the Senior Students.

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neither ought to deaden, nor does it, I think, in point of fact deaden the sympathy and the interest with which we regard your prospects ; certainly it can do nothing to deaden the impressions with which you yourselves arrive at so important a stage in your career. You are going forth, not for the first time, to engage in Christ's service, for that, as we trust, commenced for you long ere now ; but still you go, more publicly, expressly, and conclusively to commit yourselves, for your whole lives, to a special and most honourable line of effort, as servants and soldiers of Jesus Christ. Some of you, as we are glad to know, have given yourselves to the work of missions abroad ; and it will be our privilege to follow you to distant fields of labour in Asia and in Africa, with our interest and our prayers. Others, we know, had it in their hearts to take the same course, but for the present are hindered by providential obstacles. And others will occupy, we trust, fields of honourable usefulness at home, labouring among our own people.

You are likely to have your minds much occupied with the bustle and detail connected with examinations, with Church Courts, and with openings to, and applications from, fields of labour. That is inevitable. But let me remind you how important for you it is to spend time in another Presence ; to listen to another Voice ; and to seek to be clear as to the views in which, and the motives under which, you dedicate yourselves to the ministry. There are turning points in life, in which much is decided for years. It will be well for you if you are able to go forward, clear as to your calling, conscious that the great spiritual motives prevail in your hearts, having peace of conscience through the Gospel you preach, and holding fellowship with Him whose Word you are to carry to others. It is a sad thing when men undertake the ministry who are still careless or selfish men, who have not been awakened out of the worldly life, and who know that they have not. It is undoubtedly true that, in some cases, clerical studies have an attraction for men who are quite conscious that there has been no awakening, in their case, of spiritual life,—no inward decision in regard to Christ crucified, which makes all new. One would think that the prospect of passing from clerical studies to clerical responsibilities must awaken anxiety and discomfort in such persons. Well would it be if it brought them to a stand, and constrained them, now at last, to be honest, and to seek God. But apart from such cases, there may be, in the life of a minister, an entrance on a state which can only be described as a state of confusion and uncertainty ; and, indeed, a state of contented confusion and uncertainty ; with no serious, deliberate, and lowly effort after light and guidance. And this may give occasion to prolonged mental confusion, and moral bewilderment and debility, stretching over years.

Certainly, situated as we are, and variously constituted as we are, it must not be laid down that we can count on being free, or on being freed, from all forms of mental perplexity and disquiet. Often those

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who are exercised with mental conflicts, occasioning darkness and distress, are best of all entitled both to sympathy and regard. Not unfrequently this is the way in which they are made to learn lessons that prepare them for future usefulness of a special and signal kind. But there is, at all events, one attainment to be sought after—viz., the single eye, the simplicity of aim, the truthfulness in dealing with God, and the sincerity of purpose in dealing with life, to which in due time light comes. This simplicity and godly sincerity is the thread by which God guides His children through many a labyrinth. And a resolute bent that way, even when it seems to add to the man's troubles for the present, will prove the saving of the man himself from the truly fatal and ruinous confusions. The late Dr. Duncan, in answer to one who asked him how he had lost the assurance which so remarkably filled his mind when just converted, answered, "I lost that assurance because I could keep it no longer without becoming a hypocrite; and whatever I am I am not a hypocrite, and I won't be one."

It is happily not a thing that needs to be argued or demonstrated among us, that only a man who has himself believed the Gospel and felt its power, ought to be a preacher of it. That admitted truth needs only to be considered, and to have justice done to it; and in this, all of us, the oldest and the youngest alike, ought to suffer the word of exhortation. But perhaps we need even more to have this pressed upon us, that those who undertake a calling in which they are to be guides and leaders of others in the things of God, are laid under special obligations to be themselves devoted men. Surely such men must be supposed to aim, from the outset, at a thoroughness and heartiness, a strength and fruitfulness in their Christianity, above the common rate; at much of the mind of Christ; at much of the influence of the good Spirit of God. Christianity is practical; it may be known from the outside by theory, but from the inside only by experience. And how shall we wisely guide, and powerfully influence others, unless the practical life of religion is for ourselves a growing discipline, full of interest and meaning, full of aspiration and of thankfulness? How can we rightly teach, unless the significance of Christian teaching for men is vivid to us through its significance for ourselves? How can we impress and serve men, in the name of Christ, unless a power is working in us to which we are personally loyal and devoted?

But what we want is spiritual power. Spiritual power is not the same as mere goodness, a passive and recipient piety. It is a great mistake to think that piety of itself is fitted to do distinguished service. Power is force: it is the result of human nature powerfully energised by a great influence and by great convictions, and set on thereby to work. It is force intellectual and moral, in the service and under the spell of Divine truth and grace, and full of the consciousness of loyalty to Christ. Often, indeed, the spiritual power of an awakened man is more than could be augured from the man's *original* force, intellectual or moral. For under

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the inspiration, men awake ; and singleness and devotedness make them twice the men they were. Still it is force, it is power. It is purpose and enthusiasm concentrating the man in all his powers upon ends. How much of this shall be found in you is the question. Shall this fire burn and grow through all the fatal chill of custom and commonplace, persistent and increasing, stimulating aspiration, ambition, and effort, learning by every defeat, and refusing to be conquered ?

We are living in a time in which distractions multiply, through the abounding topics of interest for human minds, which on every side rise to claim recognition. And there are, especially, and doubtless will be, in this age of change, questions agitated and debated in matters ecclesiastical, or about them, which have some special interest for ecclesiastical men. Such interest these questions claim most legitimately, because they are likely to affect great public causes. It is very well known that I personally do not affect indifference on such questions, and have been prominently drawn into the discussion of some of them. Neither am I going to recommend indifference to you, because I do not think that indifference on public questions affecting Christ's cause is a good sign of a man's private and personal Christianity, or of the health of his ministry. Nevertheless, I must very earnestly say to you that eagerness on such matters, whatever view you may have been led to take of them, is not the first nor the main matter, not by far. It is not first, of course, as regards a man's personal religion ; but that truism is not what I dwell upon. It is not first, in reference to the manifestation of a useful and fruitful public spirit in the affairs of Christ's Church, or of our branch of it. The only prosperity for our Church which we ought to desire, is prosperity in reference to the interests of Christ's cause and kingdom. No Church has a right either to be or to flourish on any other terms. Now, in reference to that great interest, public questions, such as some of those now in hand, have an importance, a considerable importance as I think. But be sure of this, that no arrangements or rearrangements, on this principle or on that, will touch the quick of the cause of Christ, in the way in which it would be touched by an increase of spiritual power in the ministry. And no service you can render to your Church, by aiding to settle these things rightly, either in the one way or the other, is anything like so important as the service that will be rendered if you are made the means of raising the spiritual and moral temperature of the Christian people of your congregations ; if you possess them with a more vivid persuasion, and lead them to a more thorough experience of the might and power of Christ's redemption ; if your voice, testifying of sin and Christ, begins at last to reach and to trouble the dull, cold ear of worldliness and unbelief. That is beyond all comparison the first thing, and if this work is to be done by any of you, really and durably,—if God is to employ you in it, no doubt it will be in connection with your assiduity in these three things which Luther says make a minister—viz., Study, Experience,

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and Prayer. But then it must be study, experience, and prayer pervaded, as it were, and polarised by the right aim, animated by the unceasing question, what, in fact, Christ really is for human beings, what it is that God calls us to, when He calls us to the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ. Spiritual power will never long exist unless joined with spiritual growth. And no men have more need than ministers of Christ to hearken to the admonition, Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God.

There are place and use in the Church and in the ministry for all the various gifts and accomplishments which you can bring to bear on the work ; and each is to be welcomed, if it is subordinated to the true ends of the ministry. But among all the various qualities and powers that may thus be welcomed, or rather, not *among* them, but standing on another plane, it is to be desired that there should be arising among our younger ministry men of remarkable spiritual power, employed to give a fresh impulse to Christian work, to raise again the standard of aim and performance, and to be leaders in the most direct and faithful line of the Church's whole work. For men talk, idly enough sometimes, of leadership in Church courts. But what we most need, and surely would most value, is leadership in the enterprise of reconquering souls, and communities, and sections, and aspects of modern society for Jesus Christ. Be assured of it, this is very earnestly desired and prayed for by our pious people. And we are looking for it among you, and those who have recently preceded you, and those who are following in your footsteps. We shall not expect it to arise among persons ambitious to become conspicuous, to make a name for themselves ; men who would turn religion, as others might turn learning or oratory, into a stalking horse for their own advancement. But we may hope to see it given to us in the case of men early taught to give themselves wholly to their work in a self-forgetting spirit ; men abounding in thought and prayer, because they realise the greatness of the work, and are acutely conscious of their own deficiencies ; and are taught to bring much faith in a present Lord to bear on their own particular task in the great field. Such men would grow and strengthen, and spheres would arise for them for enlarged service. Such men I trust we have ; we need more of them, and we need them with yet more of that which we honour in them.

At all times in the Church we must take heed not to despise those whose spiritual power is not conspicuously great. Both in ministers, and in members of congregations, we must honour blameless persons, whose gifts are not remarkable, and whose power and aptitude for impressing others are not so great as we might desire. In that respect we must be prepared to recognise the various appointments of God in distributing to his children ; and, indeed, we have little temptation to forget it, for most of us need so much forbearance on many accounts, that it ought to be no difficult thing for us to forbear with others.

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Besides, we must remember that in God's sight some have a hidden grace of character, and diffuse an influence in which they are fashioned to honour, though as yet we cannot see it. In all these respects we are to be ready, in a sense, to keep our standard low. But it is an ill thing for Church and world when the general standard is low, when nothing that surpasses a low level is expected or attained. When things are prosperous or are improving, then, among our ministers and among our laymen, there ought to be arising many men of exceptional force and devotedness, who are wise and bold in Jesus Christ, and who compel all to know that men of God are among them. Among our laymen, I have said; for the very best and most fruitful, the most attractive and impressive, have often been among them. And if I have sought to point out to you that those who are to be guides and leaders of Christian congregations ought to be themselves advanced, or, at the least, advancing in Christian vitality and devotedness, I have done so, with no idea that you may not, to the end of your days, find Christians in your congregations far before you, and have cause to rejoice that they are there for your help and admonition. But when things go right, such men are never confined to the ranks of the laity. God blesses his own institutions. Men arise and multiply among the ministry, who not only are to be honoured as sincere Christians and diligent ministers, but who are strengthened with all might for their work, and in whom God's Word is as a fire, that burns and will have sway. We cannot command such instruments; we cannot command for ourselves such virtues and attainments by skill of ours. But they can be asked; and the ideal may rise before us as something desirable and attainable; and our desires and efforts may point that way. And we do not serve a hard Master, but one who gives. He gives, but not to those who are rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.

In this connection there is one thing which I am inclined to mention as a point in connection with which, in days to come, some light will fall on the manner of spirit you are of, and the heart you are taught to bear to the Master's service. In the work of your own congregations you will have various lines of usefulness—the methods of prosecuting which are tolerably well understood; so that the way of performing such duties decently or acceptably can be learned with due pains, and the habit of discharging some of them may grow almost to be a second nature. I am not going to detain you by moralising on the freshness and the edge that are given to all these lines of service, when the eye is quickened to see and the heart to feel by fresh entrance into the mind of Christ, and fresh apprehension of the ends of the ministry. But I wish to remind you that near or round many of our congregations, those are found who are no part of your flock, for whom you are not directly and primarily responsible, whom you may pass by and leave alone without imputations from any quarter that your work is neglected; and yet who stand in the greatest need of Christian care, because plainly they do not care for

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their own souls, and do not pretend to do it. Now, here I do not wish to say anything unreasonable. True, it is often the case that heart, and time, and brain are greatly occupied with the incumbent work of a man's own special charge; and if he can get through that with some earnestness, acceptance, and success, it is no small cause for gladness. And certainly you will feel no disposition to thrust your ministry, uncalled, upon those who are already under evangelical influence and true pastoral care, at the hands of ministers of other denominations. But there often are people—sometimes whole sections of the community—practically outside of all Churches, or only nominally within any, who are plainly living without God in the world. And not unfrequently we become accustomed to acquiesce in this. It is no special neglect of ours, for it is no special responsibility of ours; and so the years pass. May I not ask whether, perhaps, this is not one of the things fitted to test in our case the reality and simplicity of that zeal for God and men which should characterise the Christian and the minister? I do not say it is easy to reach these people, even to begin to reach them. It must need thought; it will need initiative, the originality implied in taking fresh departures; it may need courage; it may need patience. I do not say what line of operations may best be tried—sometimes, perhaps, a very humble and modest beginning, sometimes a more startling and audacious one. Possibly a man may have to watch and ponder long before he sees an opening for himself, and for those he can employ as his co-operators, of which use may advantageously be made. But I do not know who, more fitly than the ministers of our Church, should mourn over these people, should care for them, should burden their minds with them, should stimulate an interest in them on the part of Christian neighbours, or should more keenly watch for, and more warmly welcome, an opportunity to show them goodwill, and to lay claim to them in the Master's name. It is not the character of a minister to feel interested only in the existing congregation which represents his denomination. His proper character is to care, so far as he can reach them, for the people. And it will be a sad thing if ever our ministers cease to claim the right to care for all those in each district who are visibly wandering from the fold. It is a sad thing if we form the habit of contented acquiescence in the growth of home heathenism around our congregations. And I have known some of our worthiest people, and certainly some of our least censorious, saddened and perplexed by instances which revealed the absence in ministers of alertness to make use of opportunities that offered, perhaps through bereavement, for getting entrance among people of this kind. Some of our ministers have been signally zealous and successful in this department; and I do not doubt that in many cases, where that is not so apparent, our ministers are not the less watchful and anxious to improve their opportunities. To you, gentlemen, I make these remarks, not this last one only, but all that have preceded, because I remember how apt

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the early years of a ministry are, to set the type and fix the standard for the whole ministry that follows. Not, indeed, that those who begin best, can afford to dispense with fresh impulse and awakening, time after time, from which, as from a new beginning they set forth afresh. But these, too, are most likely to come to men who from the first desire them.

There never was a time when it was more necessary, more pressing, that the ministry of the Word should bear the stamp of spiritual power, than the present day. For not to measure the force directly tending to evil in the community, as compared with that which at some other periods has wrought, this at least is plain, that there is now a complexity of interests environing men, a manifoldness of life, a vivid and multiplying whirl, which tends to take complete possession of them, and to exclude the possibility of their looking through it, or rising above it. A philosopher, recently speaking in this city, remarked, that in the sphere of thought an ever increasing body of science has been forming itself, which traces the relation of finite things to finite things, so that no one finds it necessary to seek for a beginning or an end; and in the sphere of action, the complexity of modern life presents a thousand isolated interests crossing each other in ways too subtle to trace, and interests commercial, social, and political, in pursuing which the individual may find ample occupation for his existence, without ever feeling the need of any return on himself, or asking whether this endless striving has an object beyond itself. To which I may add, that the organisation of modern society and the conditions of modern literature bring all this close to all our people, and wrap them in its atmosphere. All this has to be dealt with, and dealt with wisely, without our uttering needless anathemas on that in it which is, or may be, innocent. But it has to be mastered and pervaded by the Word and Spirit of God, by the Divine view of man and of life, by the convictions which will set up in the minds of men a standard by which to measure the true magnitude of things; it has to be mastered by the unseen which is eternal. You, gentlemen, are called to acquaint yourselves with the world in which your hearers live, with its manifold elements, its legitimate interests, even its temptations and seductions. But not simply that you, too, may be occupied with the pleasant sights and sounds, and the perpetual movement, and so may devote yourselves to weave a decorous fringe of the serious and the pensive, for the many coloured web. Not for this. It is yours to understand how the message of a prophet speaking for God, of an evangelist publishing redemption, is to be brought home to men so situated; and how the manifold life, the manifold occupancy of mind, is to fall under the sway of great master principles which the Spirit of God teaches. What concentration you need, what teaching of God's Spirit in your own heart, what power from on high;—how it behoves you to hold the truth in Jesus, and be held by it, not in reliance even on the most venerable forms of it, but with vivid perception of its spirit and life! We would need

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preachers to come upon the age, with that sympathy with the people, doubtless, and that perception of their whole case, which nearness and a close inspection give ; and yet with that mood which sometimes grew of old out of long meditation in deserts far remote, a sense of the supreme and sole worth of the eternal realities, a temper bred of long meditative reckoning with conscience and with God. You need power. It is a great question, and it is a hopeful one. We live under the dispensation of the Spirit. We heard of the manner of His Divine working in the Church, a few days ago, in a way that stirred and impressed us all.\* Let that doctrine become your history ! It is in this direction we must look for the solution of the difficulty raised as to rendering modern preaching attractive and effective for modern audiences. Men of power will do it ; but men of spiritual power. It is not genuine spiritual power which moves only in certain accredited grooves, which keeps carefully to ancestral phrases, however associated with the piety of the past. It is not genuine spiritual power which fails to speak home to the business and the bosoms of men. Spiritual power will recognise the decisive points, the turning points for men, in relation to the actual thoughts they think, the actual work they do, and will deal with these, and with men through these. But then it must be *spiritual*—the power of men supremely alive to the main things, resolute to make those vivid in the hearts they deal with. One great example decides the point. Our Lord was full of the Spirit ; He was absolutely faithful to His Father's commission ; and *therefore*, every form of natural existence, and every incident and turn of human life and character, became for Him a mirror in which the eternal verities could be reflected,—an avenue by which the call of God could pass in to human beings and become the seed of life eternal.

I had meant to touch on some matters bearing on preaching—especially on the tendency of students and young preachers to receive and state Bible teaching only in the measure in which, as it appears to them, they have philosophised it. It is a tendency connected with influences not undeserving either of sympathy or of approval, yet misleading. But this is a subject too wide to handle at the end of an address. I will therefore detain you no farther now. To those of you whom we hope to see here in another session, let me wish health and a profitable use of summer opportunities. To those whom I have chiefly addressed, who are going out to the work of their lives, let me heartily wish God-speed. May you be helped to preach Christ, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that you may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

ROBERT RAINY.

\* In Professor Smeaton's Cunningham Lectures on the Holy Spirit.

## EVANGELISTS AND FOREIGN MISSIONARIES.

OF late years, certain views in regard to what is called the office of evangelist have been urged with great ardour, and set forth with some degree of plausibility, which seem to us erroneous, and hence hurtful in proportion as they may be received. As Dr. Kellogg seems to be the leading advocate of the theory in question, it may be assumed that his article, entitled "The Foreign Missionary," in *The Catholic Presbyterian* of March, 1881, is a fair exposition of these views. The importance of the subject is freely admitted. The nature of the work involved, and the position of the evangelist and his relations to the other agencies of the Church, are receiving a degree of attention not heretofore given to the subject, at least amongst the Churches in the United States. And we are happy to believe that the principles and suggestions presented in the article of Dr. Marquis on "The Evangelist and his Work," in *The Catholic Presbyterian* of August, 1880, commend themselves, for the most part, to those who are led to examine the subject in its true light.

The current mode is to speak of the *office* of evangelist, pastor, and teacher, as if the word *office* were the Scriptural term. Would not some confusion be avoided by speaking of the *office* of the ministry, of which evangelists, pastors, and teachers are several classes? A man is ordained to the ministry as an evangelist, pastor, or teacher, according to the special department of ministerial work which the ascended Head of the Church seems to have given him to do at the time of his ordination. As we shall see hereafter, men thus ordained may change to a different department from that undertaken at their ordination, or they may simultaneously discharge the several functions involved, without any new or further ordination. It is true, some of the partisans of the new theory seek to avoid the force of this fact, by proposing a special ordination for every change in the department of work undertaken, or, as they choose to phrase it, change of office assumed. This position will hardly need discussion amongst sound Presbyterians.

The several gifts of the Lord, mentioned in Eph. iv. 11, for the work of the ministry, will evidently be continued to His Church whilst the work they contemplate remains to be done. If the gifts of apostles and prophets have ceased, it must be because the specific work they were meant to do has been accomplished. If the work of the evangelist is yet unfinished, we are not at liberty to assume that the Head of the Church would withhold the gift of evangelists. Facts sustain this view. Not only on what is technically called foreign missionary ground, but at home, amongst the most enlightened nations of Europe and America, there remains to be done a vast amount of evangelistic work, in the true New Testament meaning of the term. A deep conviction seems to be

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more and more pervading the minds of those who seek for the coming of Christ's kingdom, of the necessity and propriety of more extensively employing men in the proper capacity of evangelists. Nor must we overlook the fact that Christ does still give some evangelists in His Church. It is unnecessary here to name those in our own day, or in the recent past, whose gifts and work leave no room for question on this point. The seal of the Spirit has been placed to their labours in such a manner as to silence all doubt, and, in some cases, to overcome in a great degree strong ecclesiastical repugnance to the real or supposed irregularity of their position and modes of operation.

The question naturally presents itself, and has been to some extent discussed, as to how far irresponsible evangelists, who have never been regularly ordained to the Gospel ministry, and who acknowledge no ecclesiastical relations, should be permitted or encouraged to labour in duly organised Churches. We do not propose to enter now into the discussion of the subject, but wish simply to record a suggestion or two in regard to it. The fact is, that within the last few years, some of the most earnest advocates of strict Church order, both in Britain and America, have gladly availed themselves of the aid of men holding exactly the position indicated, and have wrought together with them in evangelistic labours mightily owned by the Spirit of God for the salvation of souls. Aside, also, from the possible fact that the Church may have failed to give the evangelist and his work their due place in her ecclesiastical organisation, it must be borne in mind that the Lord Jesus Christ is the sovereign Head of His Church. And whilst He has given to His Church on earth a formal organisation, with officers and a ministry duly constituted for accomplishing the work entrusted to her; and whilst it is undoubtedly the duty of the Church steadily to maintain the order and authority thus established, may not the great Head of the Church, in the exercise of His sovereignty, choose to raise up and employ, from time to time, means and agents not contemplated in the Divinely-appointed order? If so, these extraordinary means and agents cannot be antagonistic to the established order of means and agents, however irregular they may be in an ecclesiastical point of view. Do we not find the Lord often exercising this sovereignty all along in the history of His Church, both under the Jewish and Christian dispensations, in working out His holy purposes for the good of His people by men and agencies wholly unofficial, or at least not included in the regular official order? May not this be the explanation of the signal blessings with which He is crowning the labours of such men in our own day? Our Redeemer is exalted a Prince and Saviour at God's right hand, and is not limited, in His dealings with His people and Church, to the established order of worship and work. His grace is broader than the channels through which it ordinarily flows. The idea that Divine grace can only be dispensed by and through ecclesiastical agents and forms is not Scriptural, and hence not Presbyterian; it is, in fact, essentially Romish.

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What, then, is the evangelist? What his work, position, and prerogatives? The new theory invests him with all the powers of Presbytery in certain respects—as the organisation of new Churches, &c.—whilst it seems to forbid his exercising other functions common to the ministry of the Word. Some of the advocates of this theory seem to constitute their evangelist a sort of irresponsible prelate *in partibus infidelium*, with powers to ordain other evangelists, pastors, and teachers, and to exercise an administrative jurisdiction hardly excelled by any diocesan bishop.

Let us examine this theory in the light of the New Testament. Do we find any foundation for it, or authority for what it involves? We find the word “evangelist” used three times in the New Testament—viz., Acts xxi. 8; Eph. iv. 11; 2 Tim. iv. 5. In the first of these passages (Acts xxi. 8) it is applied to Philip (the deacon). In the *more detailed account of his evangelistic work*, to which Dr. Kellogg refers,\* we find him, after the dispersion on account of the persecution following Stephen’s death, preaching the Gospel in Samaria, and baptising those who believed. Next, he evangelises the Ethiopian eunuch, on the way from Jerusalem to Gaza. He is next found at Azotus; and, passing through, he preaches the Gospel to all the cities till he comes to Cæsarea (Acts viii. 5-12, 26-40). The only further record we have in regard to him is in Acts xxi. 8, where it is mentioned that Paul and his company, many years afterwards, were guests in his house at Cæsarea. This is the only place in which the term “evangelist” is applied to him. He appears to have had his residence definitely established at Cæsarea; and from ver. 9 we learn that he had a family, as four of his daughters, which were virgins, did prophesy. We are left wholly to inference in regard to the remainder of Philip’s life and labours. The record tells us nothing more.

As Dr. Kellogg correctly observes, “there is not the slightest intimation that he ever acted as an apostolic deputy.” There is just as little proof that he ever organised churches, or did anything else than simply preach the Gospel, and baptise those who believed through his ministry. The presbytery at Jerusalem sent a committee to look after the work in Samaria; and we have just as good reason for assuming that they did the same in regard to the other places evangelised by Philip, as that Philip exercised any presbyterial function of organisation or supervision. The record says nothing at all about it.

Dr. Hodge, in his commentary on Eph. iv. 11, says of the passages above named, as containing the word “evangelist,” they “are the only passages in which the word occurs, and in no one of them does the connection, or any other consideration, demand any other meaning than the one commonly assigned to it.” He also says, in treating of the same passage: “When Timothy was exhorted to do the work of an evangelist, the exhortation was simply to be a faithful preacher of the Gospel.” He further says: “The use of *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι* in such passages as Acts viii.

\* The Catholic Presbyterian, March, 1881, page 183.

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4; xiv. 7; 1 Cor. i. 17; and 2 Cor. x. 16, serves to confirm the commonly received opinion that an evangelist is one who makes known the Gospel. That Timothy and Titus were in some sense apostolic vicars—*i.e.*, men clothed with special powers, for a special purpose and for a limited time, may be admitted, but this does not determine the nature of an evangelist. They exercised these powers not as evangelists, but as delegates or commissioners."

This is unquestionably the true doctrine in regard to evangelists. No other can be deduced from the New Testament. In regard to missionaries, whether in ancient or modern times, we can find no ground for the assertion "that the official title by which the Holy Spirit designated such men was the term 'evangelist.'"\*

When we examine the facts of the case, whether in our own days or in those of the apostles, we find just as little reason for regarding "missionary" and "evangelist" as synonymous terms. This assumption affects the whole treatment of the subject in the article referred to.

Erroneous premises must lead to wrong conclusions. It would be too tedious to go over the article and point these out in detail; they are apparent enough when once we accept and apply the simple and proper meaning of "evangelist," as found in the New Testament. The author has, in fact, partly done the work of exposing his errors for us. On page 182 he says, for instance: "We are at once struck with the fact that no less than three of the canonical epistles are entirely taken up with instructions to Timothy and Titus as to the duties of men who, like them, were called to the evangelistic office." In a note at the bottom of the page he effectually refutes this extraordinary statement. He says: "They contain, it is true, much instruction bearing on the duties of the pastoral office, but so do they also as to the office of the deacon, as well as many other matters pertaining to Church order and discipline." The attempted explanation that these instructions were given to Timothy and Titus "concerning their duties as evangelists," is inadmissible on the principles already laid down. The simple reading of these epistles, without the bias of a special theory, would hardly fail to confirm the title usually given them, of *pastoral epistles*.

If we look at what is requisite for the propagation of the Gospel, as well as the facts of its history, we shall find just as little ground for making "foreign missionary" and "evangelist" synonymous, as we do in the New Testament. The utmost prerogatives with which it is possible, on Presbyterian principles, to clothe their ideal evangelist, must be such as inhere in the Presbytery, and they must be tacitly or explicitly delegated to those who exercise them. These same powers may be exercised by any members of the Presbytery, be they evangelists, pastors, or teachers, when duly commissioned by the Presbytery to do so. The evangelist, by virtue of his *office*, or department of work, or gift, therefore, has no advantage in this respect over any of his Presbyterian colleagues.

\* Dr. Kellogg's article, page 181.

There is no evidence from the New Testament record that all the missionaries of even the apostolic age were occupied exclusively, or even principally, as evangelists, either in the true or extraordinary sense of the word. It must be remembered that the term occurs but three times in the New Testament; and in only two of these is it applied to individuals. It is true there are various others mentioned, as Barnabas, Mark, Silas, &c., who were largely engaged in proper evangelistic work. But there is no positive evidence, nor any legitimate inference, that these same men were not also occupied a portion of their time, possibly much of their public lives, in doing pastoral work. For aught we know of several of the apostles, they may have spent the main part of their ministerial lives as pastors of the churches they founded, although, doubtless, not neglecting to do also the work of an evangelist. James seems to have abode at Jerusalem, and to have laboured chiefly, if not exclusively, in that city. And evidence is certainly not wanting that others of them tarried for considerable periods in certain cities. Doing what? Not preaching only to the unevangelised. No doubt also teaching and edifying the disciples. In other words, doing pastoral work. And what else shall we call much of the work done by Paul and his companions? How else shall we describe his labours in Ephesus, where he taught publicly and from house to house, and by the space of three years ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears? (*Vide Acts xx. 20, 31*).

And the facts are not so very different in modern times. Most of those who have been ordained as evangelists, in the United States at least, went to the frontier or destitute settlements to which they were designated, in the expectation that they would naturally become the pastors of the churches they might succeed in founding. And so it turned out in many cases. It often comes to pass, also, that one of these ministers, whilst serving one or more churches as pastor, continues to do the work of an evangelist in other parts. And not unfrequently such an one becomes bishop of several churches, embracing an extensive district, perhaps quite as large as Crete, where Titus was left to do a not dissimilar work. And the modern missionary, if a Presbyterian, solemnly promises to be governed by the same rules which the Holy Spirit, by the Apostle Paul, laid down for the direction of Titus and Timothy.

The assumption that only evangelists are needed on foreign missionary ground is based on a very partial view of the requirements of the work, and an inadequate knowledge of the agents and their qualifications who are employed in carrying it on. Preaching the Gospel, or evangelising, must, of course, be one of the main departments of the work. But if it be not supplemented by the pastoral and teaching work, its results must be meagre and transitory. The necessity for this latter work makes itself imperatively felt as soon as the work of evangelisation begins to give fruit. The advocates of the new theory recognise this,

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and attempt to provide for it by in reality investing their ideal evangelist with all the powers, and charging him with all the duties of the several departments of the ministerial office. They call things by other names, and deem they have made a discovery.

Yet, withal, it makes a difference. The pastoral and teaching work must be provided for on the foreign field before native pastors and teachers can be available, or rather in order to provide and train such for their work. Very few years' experience on the foreign field, or a careful study in any other way of missionaries and their work, ought to convince any one of the utter fallacy of the theory in question. The fact is soon verified that some of the best and most successful missionaries have not received the special gift of evangelists. Some, at least, leave a noble record, whose gift and work are of the pastoral class. Many a man can do his very best work as pastor of some particular church or churches, who would utterly fail if he attempted to do the work of an evangelist, in the proper sense of the term. And there certainly are localities, as in large cities, in which no more important work can be done, in its influence on the establishment and future progress of the Gospel, than the faithful labours of a devoted pastor. Such a thing is needed as an example and stimulus to those trained up on the ground to take the future charge of the work.

The education of a native ministry is conceded by all to be indispensable for the true evangelisation of any land or people. This can no more be done abroad than at home without thorough instruction; and this can only be secured by men giving themselves specially to the work involved. No man can devote himself properly to this, and at the same time successfully do the work of an evangelist. Both may be attempted conjointly, and with some degree of success in one or possibly in both departments, but the arrangement is neither wise nor desirable. A good many missionaries find themselves compelled to accept it. Certainly, however, very few who have made the experiment would recommend it as a permanent plan. As many missions are constituted, no doubt the best that can be done under the circumstances is for their members to combine the several departments of the ministerial office in their labours. But if it were possible, all will admit that a different plan would be better.

If the foregoing views are correct, the term "evangelist" can no more be exclusively used to designate the foreign missionary than the terms pastor and teacher. Men sometimes reach the foreign field so imbued with the idea that they are evangelists in some special sense of the word, that they very reluctantly assume the position and perform the duties most urgently needed, and for which they are best qualified. The writer some years ago advised an excellent brother, of a different mission from his own, to have himself registered as pastor of the church he was ready to organise, so as to be able legally to celebrate marriages. The answer came quick and positive: "I was ordained an evangelist,

and would not permit any church to elect me its pastor." This view was subsequently modified ; and perhaps no man in Brazil is doing a more important work as actual pastor of the church he has gathered about him, and in training several young men for the ministry, for both of which he has undoubted gifts ; whilst he continues to do the work of an evangelist as time and opportunity permit.

Another error foreign missionaries frequently fall into is, that they (the foreigners) are to be the evangelists, whilst the natives can only be ordained as pastors. Some missionary societies adopt the same idea, or seem to favour it by their rules and instructions. It is marvellous that any whose duty it is to study the subject, or who have had much experience on the foreign field, should hold to this view. In some cases, as we have already seen, the gifts and circumstances of the foreigners indicate the very reverse. It is equally true that the great Head of the Church often endows the natives most specially with the gift of evangelists. This we see in fact ; and we could not naturally expect it to be otherwise. If the fact of being a native can give advantage in any department of mission work, it is unquestionably in that of evangelising.

Is there, then, a necessity for adopting this ideal, in distinction from the New Testament evangelist, on the foreign field ? It seems to us there is not. If in a few given cases there might seem to be some convenience or advantage, there is great danger, or rather absolute certainty, of such a system working great evil if adopted. There are, perhaps, few missionaries who are not tempted at times to feel that the exercise of arbitrary power would be very convenient, and on occasions very useful. Better, however, it should not be so.

We know of one missionary Presbytery which found it necessary to restrain the use of the extraordinary prerogative with which the new theory invests its evangelists. We know of another case in which a missionary Presbytery was dissolved, very greatly to the detriment of the work, because some members of the mission connected with it had imbibed these unscriptural views.

It is devoutly to be hoped that the relations of the missionary to the Church which sends him, and to the churches he may found, as well as to the other missionaries who may be labouring in the same field, may be treated on a Scriptural and sound Presbyterian basis. If so, many of the assumed, as well as some of the actual, difficulties will disappear.

The difficulties of evangelisation, or the propagation of the Gospel, are by no means limited to the foreign field. Missionaries and others seem sometimes to forget this. The difficulties in the foreign work have doubtless their special phases. But the principles of true Presbyterianism, as laid down in the Gospel, are adequate to deal with them all. Innovations and experiments not based on the principles taught in the Word of God, can only increase the difficulties, and produce confusion.

A. L. BLACKFORD.

BAHIA, BRAZIL.

## THE JEWISH PERSECUTION : ITS CAUSE AND CURE.

EVERY generous man, seeing or hearing of the disgraceful persecution of the Jews in Russia, the shameful agitation in Germany, and the bad treatment which they receive in Roumania, naturally asks : What is the cause of it ?

I think it may be regarded, from a human point of view, as the fruit of an old disease which has existed for more than eighteen centuries—a heart disease of blind hatred between Jews and Christians.

The hatred began with the Jews, who persecuted the Christians in a most horrible manner during the first century, when they were as yet regarded as only a Jewish sect.

The first persecution was that in which Stephen was martyred, and the Christians were obliged to flee from Jerusalem before the rage of the fanatical Jews, who looked upon them as schismatics, fallen away from the doctrine of Moses. This persecution of nearly two thousand years ago need cause us no wonder, since we see the same things enacted between Christian and Christian sixteen hundred years later. In those days religion and nationality signified the same thing. If a man fell away from his religion, it was considered as a denial of his nationality.

The scattered Jewish Christians in bringing the Gospel to the heathen, told them also what they would have to suffer for Christ's sake from their persecutors, the Jews. The heathen, in receiving the Gospel, indirectly imbibed some bad feelings towards the Jews.

The second persecution which the Christians suffered under King Agrippa, at the instigation of the Jews, and in which James the Elder found a martyr's death, fomented those bad feelings into hatred.

The absence of the Roman Procurator Albinus, was taken advantage of by the High-priest Ananus, to set on foot a third persecution of Christians, which was not calculated to reconcile them to their persecutors ; and the more bitter the persecution, the wider gaped the chasm which separated Jews and Christians.

When Constantine had, in the fourth century, raised the doctrines of Christ to the position of the established religion of the State, the Christians for the first time found peace ; it was not of long duration, for, forgetting Christ's admonition, " Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you," they took bloody vengeance on their foes, the Jews and heathen. The persecuted now became persecutors, and if the Jews and heathen were to blame in their persecutions before the time of Constantine, the Christians soon exceeded their guilt when they attained to power.

It is shocking to read in the history of the Jews, how cruel the

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Christians were to the people to whom they owe so much spiritual gratitude. Jesus, our blessed Lord and Saviour, was a Jew according to the flesh. The apostles whom Jesus sent into all the world to teach all nations, and to baptise in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, were Jews. The Gentile Christians, instead of seeking the spiritual and everlasting welfare of the Jews, behaved disgracefully towards them. The popes, councils, bishops, monks, kings and their subjects, all united in wrath against the Jews, whom more than once they slaughtered in masses. They strangled them by thousands in Spain, Italy, Germany, France, and even in the blessed Bible country, Britain. Death was dearer to them than life; very often the persecuted Jews locked themselves in their houses, and there killed each other, that they might not fall into the hands of the so-called Christians.

Sir Walter Scott says, in "*Ivanhoe*," "that except perhaps the flying fish, there were no creatures existing on the earth, in the air, or waters, which were the object of such persecutions as the Jews of this period. Upon the slightest provocation, and for most absurd and groundless reasons, their persons and property were exposed to every turn of popular fury; for Norman, Saxon, Dane, and Briton, however adverse to each other these races were, contended which should look with greatest detestation upon a people whom it was accounted a point of religion to hate, to revile, to despise, to plunder, and to persecute. The kings of the Norman race, and the independent nobles who followed their example in all acts of tyranny, maintained against this devoted people a persecution of a more regular, calculated, and self-interested kind. It is a well-known story of King John that he confined a wealthy Jew in one of the royal castles and caused one of his teeth to be torn out every day, until, when the jaw of the unfortunate Israelite was half displenished, he consented to pay a large sum, which it had been the tyrant's object to extort."

The persecutions of the Jews thus arose, first from bad feelings on the part of the Christians towards the Jews, which turned to hatred; and secondly, from a regular, calculated self-interest. One would think that such hatred and persecution could exist only in the dark times of the middle ages, but not in our enlightened and civilised nineteenth century.

Before the persecution in Russia and the anti-Semitic agitation in Germany commenced, I heard many Jews as well as Christians say: "We live in a time in which there is no difference between Jew and Gentile." Late events, however, have proved that the feelings of nominal Christians against the Jews are the same as in olden times. The anti-Semitic agitation has shown us that only the true religion of Christ can unite Jew and Gentile. Germany, which boasts so much of its civilisation, has lately proved that, unless men's hearts are civilised through Christ, they are still as capable of persecuting the Jews now as in the uncivilised period of the middle ages.

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These bitter feelings against the Jews manifest themselves in almost all the States of the world, and even in Britain many persons hold with Professor Goldwin Smith, who appeared last year for the second time in full tilt against the people to whom the Christians are so much indebted. Professor Goldwin Smith, in his article in the *Nineteenth Century* for last October, brought no new accusation against the Jews, but repeated the old story, showing that the human heart in the nineteenth century is the same as it was in all past ages.

During the time I have spent in Great Britain, I discovered that considerable suspicion and prejudice against the Jews may be found even among good Christians. It is no wonder, therefore, that the rough, bigoted people in Russia persecute the Jews so fiercely.

Frequently I have been asked by Christian friends, "How is it that the Jews care so much for gold and are so remarkable for money-getting?" I replied that the Christians like gold as well as the Jews, if not better; and to my mind the Jew is not to be blamed because he is careful, and does not waste his money in useless purchases, as many Christians do. Take, for instance, Russia, Poland, or Roumania, where the Jews are very numerous, and you will find them industrious and also careful in expending their money. It is their chief delight to be able to give their children a religious education, and even the poorest of them take the greatest pains that their sons may be able to read Hebrew, in order that they may offer their devotions in the language which is holy to them. The poorest Jew will half starve himself the whole week that he may have three good meals on his Sabbath day, for he believes that thereby he does God good service. The Christian, passing through a Jewish street on Friday evenings, and seeing through the windows of the houses inhabited by the poorer classes of Jews well-spread tables, and the house itself illuminated with many candles, will say: "All this he has got by cheating us." This is an unfortunate feeling towards the Jews, existing even among the Christians of Great Britain, that land of humanity, where no one would expect to find unfair opinions and unbrotherly actions; it has a place also among many learned people who like to be called philosophers, but who at the same time do not like to observe the advice of the real philosopher, Plutarch, of the first century, when he says "that a man should not allow himself to hate even his enemies, because if he indulge this passion on some occasions, he will contract such a vicious habit of mind as by degrees will break out upon those who are his friends." This is what was dictated to the world by our Lord and Master Jesus Christ about a hundred years before this philosopher: "Love your enemies," &c. If among Christians and the civilised nations we find such hostility to the Jews, and such blind hatred, can we wonder at the disgraceful persecution of the Jews in Russia—a country far behind the civilisation of other European lands?

Feeling these considerations, I was moved to issue in May, 1881, a circular in which I requested the learned world to give their opinion as

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to what practical methods could be adopted for bringing about a reconciliation between Jews and Christians so that the one should be a blessing to the other.

It is well known that nothing in the world can take place without leaving impressions—upon some good, upon others bad. Such was the case with my circular; no sooner had it been issued than answers were abundantly sent in, some favourable, some unfavourable; but the latter did not discourage me. I resolved to publish them together, with such suggestions as the following:—

I. The case of the Jewish question must be taken in hand by both Jews and Christians, so that a society of both should be formed, whose object it would be to undertake the solving of the question. Should this united society of Jews and Christians be formed, then an important step has been already taken.

II. It would be well if the Society adopted for its programme three chief principles—*Unity, Freedom, and Love*.

(a.) *Unity* with regard to the conflicts between nation and nation, or between Jews and Gentiles, so that our motto should be, "Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother?" (Malachi ii. 10).

(b.) *Freedom of Thought* in regard to belief and religion, so that one should not condemn the other for thinking differently from him, for it is only through peace and liberty that we can forward the welfare of mankind, and freedom alone can lead us in the right way. None should hate another for his belief; and the free interchange of thought in things pertaining to belief should not draw hatred after it.

(c.) *Love* in all social dealings. Every member should devote himself with self-denial to work for the common good.

True philosophy knows no other God than the God who is Love, and the Holy Scriptures teach us that he who has no love does not know God (1 John iv. 18). Love produces everything in nature, and where love does not reign, there is destruction and desolation. Therefore love must inspire the work which it imposes upon itself—namely, to unite all the children of one Father as brethren.

III. The Society should endeavour to form sub-committees in all possible places, which should hold active communication with the General Committee, to whom they should report the social intercourse they may be able to bring about between Jews and Christians.

These sub-committees must carefully study the local circumstances, and lay clearly before the General Committee all causes of dispute, and propose such methods as would settle them and promote union and peace among the inhabitants. Every sub-committee must have its own special methods, for we cannot put side by side the Jews and Christians of Britain, France, Germany, and other civilised countries, with those of Russia, Poland, and the East.

IV. The society should have a journal in different languages as their

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organ, which should be the means of promoting concord among the nations, and of drawing them nearer to one another.

So far my own suggestions. And now I shall give the opinions of some others which I received in answer to my circular, with regard to the Jewish question.

Rev. Professor Paulus Cassel, D.D., of Berlin, writes :—

"MY DEAR MR. BASSIN,—With this letter I send you my pamphlet, 'Die Anti-semiten und die Christliche Kirche;' you will therein find my view of the momentousness of the present Jewish agitation. I also draw your attention to my previous publications, 'Sendschreiben an Heinrich von Treitschke,' and 'Die Juden in der Weltgeschichte.' I have treated this subject for years in my periodical 'Sunem.' What I think about the whole affair is no secret in Germany, nor, I think, in England.

"There was always a Jewish question, but only in so far as it was asked, How is it possible that there are yet any Jews? although they have lived in the midst of Christians for centuries. The answer was, that so many Jews remaining, explained itself by so much *heathendom* remaining among the nations. And what is, in fact, called the Jewish question, is nothing more than heathenish hatred against the Jews.

"The question of the agitators is not one of spirit and belief, but of money. Instead of seeking to subdue a false prejudice, men rather inflame it. They have no other reason for this than the knowledge that they are in the majority. What the Bohemians in Prague do to the Germans, and the French in Marseilles to the Italians, will others do to the Jews. In the latter case, they think of the villas and the incomes which the Jews have in the large towns.

"It is a sign of a still existing political roughness which makes itself notorious towards a minority. The right means to overcome it are to be found only in a sound moral education through the Gospel. Beyond this, there is no other means but the sword of authority, and it can check violent acts only for the moment. This Gospel includes the humanity with which one suffers and endures. It acknowledges the right of others to live on God's earth as well as those who are themselves Christians. It is the function of the Gospel to elevate and improve others. She gives the sword to authority to punish and prevent evil, but she ought to subdue the arbitrariness of the majority, when it offers violence to others, plunders them, and drives them out.

"The Jewish question is the Christian question; but is also a culture question.

"From the condition of the Jews one can draw a conclusion as to that of the people among whom they live. They have been persecuted for 1500 years, and have endured the persecution, and gained much thereby. It was surely time to let them experience humanity and justice.

"But after a short tranquillity in some countries, there now comes again the anti-Semitic animosity, rougher than ever; a false religious zeal, because without pathos. Such can bring no blessing; least of all to the persecutors.

"Hatred is a seed which always brings corrupt fruit. It can never be justified; one can have no agreement or dealing with it; endeavours after conciliation with it are impossible. The love which one claims for himself, he should also show to others. When Christ rejected the Pharisees, He meant not those in Jerusalem alone; when He had compassion on the Samaritan woman, so surely also on the sick in Israel. Should He approach that roaring rabble, as they appear in Berlin and elsewhere, He would take them for His murderers coming to crucify Him anew. He has been rejected, but He has not rejected Israel. He proclaims: 'Go forth and teach that I am Love.'"

I think that the impartial answer of Mr. Butynski, a Russian orthodox Jew of Kowno, will also be read with interest :—

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"Honoured and invited by your circular, permit me to address to you my sincere opinion upon your recent movement on the 'Jewish Question.' Without having the honour of personal acquaintance with you, I hope you will make the best use of these lines, such as they are.

"In the first place, I acknowledge that I belong to the orthodox Jewish party. Independently of our belief in an expected Messiah, I am convinced that the Jewish race, after having happily escaped extermination by the Philistines, Babylonians, Greeks, and Romans, and survived the Inquisition and the Crusades, can never be rooted out by brutal or non-intelligent persecution. Let the promoting of fraternal disunion and of the fury of the mob be ever so base and cruel, it can only partly injure Israel outwardly for a time; the inward germ of the priestly holy people ever reappears, like a phoenix from the ashes.

"I contend further, that, as you say in your circular, 'the Jew cannot cease to be hated by the nations until he become changed,' is to be understood not in the sense of your Mission, otherwise we must reason upon other grounds. 'The Jew is conservative,' is he so in religious matters? and if so, whom does he harm with it? The most modern Jews are no less political and social than conservative, and this is again a reason for complaint against them.

"'He is hated by the nations,' is he not much more envied and feared on account of his abilities and endurance?

"How far the Jew may be a stumbling-block to all nations, depends upon how the matter is regarded. Naturally, Laselle and Carl Mart are 'stumbling-blocks' to great manufacturers, as also Lasker is to high-standing Wagner & Co., and as on the other hand a usurer is to a spendthrift noble, and a publican to a drunken artisan; but how can individual accusations fall upon a whole nation?

"That a change must take place amongst the Jews is, unfortunately, very certain! They have in the last centuries adopted fearful social vices, from which the sooner they are purged the better. Let the responsibility rest with those who forced that people to these vices, as a cast-out, persecuted step-child is forced to lying, stealing, and other crimes.

"Now to your two questions, which, indeed, are but one.

"The only and most practical advice I can give is, that the clergy, preachers, journalists, officials, and all those who have any influence upon national and public opinion, and who mean conscientiously, faithfully, and honestly by mankind, should use all their eloquence to remove from their nations a terrible prejudice against the Jews, for the genuine mind will find its allies in the real instinct of the nation, and when opposed to this, the enmity of the instigator will be powerless and the Jewish question will be solved.

"Virtues and vices are to be found among Jews as well as in other nations, but no one may attribute the crime of an individual to a whole nation, and call forth a crusade against it!

"To your concluding verse from Malachi we can subjoin a corresponding quotation from the Talmud: 'O Heaven! are we not your brothers, the children of one father, the children of one mother? But what is it that we are separated from all nations and tongues that you have determined so much evil upon us?'—  
(Ta'anith xviii. 1).

J. BUTYNSKI."

I reserve for the end the opinion of Professor Franz Delitzsch, D.D., who is a great friend of the Jews. He writes from Leipsic, 11th July, 1881:—

"I am unable to fulfil all my correspondence. What I think of the Jewish question will be seen from the little work I send you, 'Rohlig's Talmudjude, beleuchtet von Franz Delitzsch.' The most sympathising seemed to me to be the work of Professor Grau, in Königsberg, 'Die Judenfrage ein Geheimniss?' I am so overburdened that I must ask your indulgence.

"The new Prussian journal, *The Kreuz*, in a well-meant notice, regrets that in

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my work I did not also endeavour to communicate my thoughts upon the solving of the Jewish question. I have already done so elsewhere.

"There is nothing to be done in the way of administration. One cannot lawfully close the paths of competition to the Jews which the law has opened for them. The talents, and in a measure also the virtues, by means of which they always push farther onwards and upwards, cannot be destroyed. The broken-down barriers cannot be restored. The anti-Semitic petition is a powerless protest which only increases the opposition.

"How so? We say to the Jews: 'Be humble; do not push yourself so forward and before everyone else; cease to scorn Christianity, and to praise the religion of your nation as the highest, whereas it was only a preparatory step to Christianity.'

"And we say to the Christians, 'See the consequences of your backsliding. You have unchristianised oaths, matrimony, and the schools in favour of the Jews. Your uncircumcised rabbis have struck out the Messiah from the Old Testament, and the miracle from the history of salvation. Who among you understands the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, the chapter about Him in whom Israel's history attains its summit, and who offered Himself for His people, and for all nations? The Talmud is more Christian than you are, for Talmud and Midrasch teach, as "Wünsche" in his work, "Die Leiden des Messias," 1870, has shown, a suffering Christ. And the Talmud affirms that Jesus did wonders through the power of the most holy name of God. Your exegetes, your biographers of Jesus, have forged weapons for the Jews. The Jewish literature over which you now cry "murder," is become strong and of full age in the bosom of your celebrated classics. You have lost your crown; but it is not the Jews who have robbed you of it; you have sacrificed it yourselves for the Thyrsus of "Religion in the time of Darwin." From this backsliding there is no other way of return but by repentance.'

"If this call should find a mutual hearing, then would a tolerable *modus vivendi* be formed, and that is for the present the only possible solution of the Jewish question.

"But we, the representatives of the Jewish mission—we, who make love to Israel, inaccessible to national hatred, will not cease to appease both sides. We point the Radicals to the God of universal history. We know His ways from the words of prophecy; He makes even the wicked useful to Himself; but woe to those who unchain the Evil One!—Your brother in Christ, DELITZSCH."

In conclusion, I appeal to all who wish to advance human peace and happiness, to unite in endeavouring to settle the quarrel between Jews and Christians. If we do this in the name of God, who is Love, we shall never fail.

ELIESER BASSIN.

## THE RELIGIOUS HOUSE OF PLUSCARDYN.\*

THE religious house of Pluscardyn, in Morayshire, has found an historian in the Rev. S. R. Macphail, formerly of Elgin, now of Canning Street Presbyterian Church, Liverpool, who, after diligent search through antiquarian libraries and dusty charter-chests, after use

\* History of the Religious House of Pluscardyn, Convent of the Vale of St. Andrew, in Morayshire: with Introduction, containing the History and a Description of the Present State of the Mother-House of the Order of Vallis Caunium in Burgundy, by Rev. S. R. Macphail, A.M., Liverpool. Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier, 1881.

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of eyes and ears, has traced its long life from its adventurous settlement to its present ruin. Not content with telling us all about Pluscardyn, he has let us see it before it was made, and traced its immediate and remote ancestry in the mother-house of the Val de Choux and in the earlier monastic orders of Western Europe. The book is full of hard and honest work, and probably only the few Presbyterians who have known what it is to trace the life of an obscure mediæval religious fraternity can guess the amount of toil required to write the short chapters on the rise of the monastic orders, and on the rule, privileges, and reform of Vallis Caulium.

The mother-house of Pluscardyn was the monastery of Vallis Caulium, in the Forest of Chatillon, in Burgundy. The author of the history of Beaulieu Priory, one of the three houses of the order in Scotland, had said that "apparently nothing remains of the monastic buildings, . . . and the only traces of the existence of the house seem to be the large fish-ponds which afforded to the brethren a plentiful supply of their Lenten fast-day food." Mr. Macphail, however, made a journey to Chatillon-sur-Seine, and after some search discovered the old priory standing in great measure complete, the chapel and other devotional buildings only in ruins, but enough remaining to show what the house had been like. He found it in the possession of a French gentleman, M. Alker, who takes pride in his possession, who has bought up the whole Val de Chou in separate portions at six successive times, and who has carefully preserved and is trying to restore the best portions of the old buildings.

This ancient priory gave its name to a somewhat obscure reform of the great Benedictine order; and the rule of Val de Chou was one of the many versions of the rule of St. Benedict. Like some other reformations of the Benedictine order which came late, the rule of the Val de Chou seems to have been an attempt to combine two earlier and famous rules—those of Chartreuse and Cîteaux; but, like all monastic orders, the monks found the rule of their founder too hard for them, and obtained from the pope relaxations. They differed from their neighbours in getting sooner tired of strict living. Pope Innocent III. sanctioned their rule in 1205. Eighteen years afterwards, Honorius III. granted a relaxation of this rule in the Bull which begins: "According to the Word of the Lord, *The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*; and hence it happens," &c. The Scotch houses, Pluscardyn, Beaulieu, and Ardochattan, were all founded in the same year, 1230, twenty-five years after Innocent's Bull of foundation, and seven after Honorius had permitted the monks to live an easier life. It is hard to say why monks of the Val de Chou found their way into Scotland, and still harder to explain how three priories were founded in one year, and none afterwards. Mr. Macphail supposes that the order was brought over from Burgundy to Scotland by Malvoisin, Alexander II.'s Archbishop of St. Andrews, who had been at Rome shortly after its foundation, and who

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induced the king to strengthen the Benedictine life in Scotland by adding three monasteries living according to the latest fashion of Benedictine rule.

The house of Pluscardyn, founded by Alexander in a province which had been for long one of the most turbulent in Scotland, and had only been recently reduced to subjection, was doubtless meant to help in establishing on firm basis the kingly power in Morayshire. For a long time it owed no allegiance to any ecclesiastical superior in Scotland, and acknowledged only the superior rule of the king and of the prior of the mother-house. Its historian thinks that he can trace in the various gifts of land an attempt to secure that all over the neighbourhood the monks, who owed all to the king, and were bound by special ties to him, might be able to exercise a very complete system of espionage; and such a use of religious houses fell in with the spirit of the age, and with the general policy of the descendants of Margaret.

There is reason to believe that the Vale of Ploschardin, as the old charters spell it, had been the seat of an old Celtic place of worship; and our author tells us that tradition and a study of charters combine in making it almost certain that the valley was known by the name of St. Andrew before the foundation of the monastery. The king gave to the monks settled in the quiet valley the whole of his forest of Pluscardyn, and the forest and land of Auchtertyre, together with various rights of fishings and multures and tithes of iron.\*

This gift of the Elgin mill was regarded as a very valuable one, and was specially mentioned in the pope's Bull of 1263: "The mill, with the mill-lades and all their pertinents, which we have in the *villa* which is called Elgyn." It enabled the brethren to get their hands into the meal-sacks of the Elgin burghers, and was much more liked by the monks than by the citizens. It seems to have been characteristic of the houses of the order of Vallis Caulium to live by taxing the industries of their neighbours. The mother-house in Burgundy had tithes of wine and salt from lands in the neighbourhood, and, in consequence, was engaged in perpetual war with its laic neighbours. So it was in Morayshire. There was continual quarrel and suit, and most prominent were the quarrels with the burghers of Elgin. It appears that the monks were allowed to confiscate any sack of meal carried on horseback or on man's shoulders which had not paid the dues; and dim visions of unfortunate horses and porters put in the "pound" by the monks for carrying untaxed meal flit through old agreements. One

\* In a second charter granted by the royal founder, Alexander confirmed to the brethren "our mill of Elgin, with all other mills belonging to that mill, . . . so that the aforesaid brethren may have, and hold, and possess all the aforesaid mills in free, pure, and perpetual alms, with all multure payable from all the lands from which, at the time of this grant, we drew multure, or ought to have drawn it, if it had been tilled, with their waters and stanks." But the monks were strictly forbidden from killing stags, goats, or wild boars, all of which were reserved to the king for sport. The brethren, however, were allowed to kill wolves, provided they took them in snares.

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can see the burgher, intent on keeping all his meal to himself, with his sacks on horseback, trying to get home safely, and the monks coming down on him and carrying off the meal, while the burghers' wives scold shrilly, and the boys join in the tumult.

There is not much said about any spiritual work done at Pluscardyn, or in the mother-house in the Vallis Caulium, and it is very doubtful if the monks were much inclined thereto. They were good gardeners; their fruit-trees were famous; and the climate—where, as an old chronicler said: "*Rariores multo nebulæ atque pluvix, quam usquam alibi*"—doubtless furthered their efforts. There is no trace of any library or literary work in the priory; the monks lived, and took their cultures, and their tithes of iron and other dues, and kept their gardens in good order. It was not a very heroic kind of life either at Pluscardyn or at Vallis Caulium. The monks by that time were the country gentlemen of their day, and vegetated, not unhappily, in their valleys.

The days of heroic monasticism of the Benedictine type were over ere the order of the Val de Chou was founded. In earlier times, monasticism under Benedictine and Columban rule had been the great missionary instrument in the hands of the Western Church. The Celtic monasteries, organised in imitation of the Celtic tribal system, had been found admirably adapted for evangelising and civilising men who still lived in tribes and had such loose land tenure that absentee proprietors were impossible things. The Benedictine monasteries, with their combination of work and prayer, had done noble service in Western Europe when the rude tribes of the North were settling down after the wandering of the nations, within the limits of the old Roman Empire. They were the Lovedales and the Livingstonias of their day, and other princes besides Pippin of Heristal encouraged the settlement of Benedictine monks among them to teach their people the dignity of labour and skill in the manual arts. Those days had long gone by in Burgundy ere Count Eudes, with the hereditary fondness of his family for Benedictine reformations, founded the mother-house in the Val de Chou. Bernard had satirised the wine-drinking and the dainty dress of the Cluniacs nearly one hundred years before the order of the Val de Chou was instituted. The Cistercians themselves were by that time becoming luxurious, and the Carthusians, although they had not yet given their name to a dish\* and a liqueur, were sadly degenerate from the days when their monks had led the squalid life of the first founders in the gloomy barren valley of Chartreuse. The real outcome of monastic life in the beginning of the thirteenth century was the Dominican and Franciscan movements. Dominic and Francis both understood what new development of ecclesiastical life was needed to meet the wants of

\* The Carthusian rule prohibited the eating of any food not vegetable. The Chartreuse is a dish of spiced meat covered with vegetables, supposed to have been invented to enable the monks to keep their vow visibly if not really.

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the age. The poison of Averroistic pantheism had spread from the Moorish schools in Spain, and an immoral naturalism was eating out the life of European society ; while the Church, which had lost the art of preaching in her parishes and dioceses, was unable to cope with the evil. It was in this emergency that Dominic organised his famous order of preaching friars, and speedily attracted to his side many of the most gifted spirits of Europe.

The Dominicans, strong in intellectual and scholarly powers, settled in almost every university town, and the colleges of the preaching friars proved in many cases more attractive than the older schools. The great philosophical and theological work which made the thirteenth century so famous, and has made it rank as the bloom-time of scholasticism, was chiefly done by Dominican monks. Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, and many others were all members of the order of the preaching friars. The same zeal which established colleges, wrote books of apologetic against Arabian mysticism, and constructed those vast doctrinal systems which are found in the works of the leaders of the schoolmen in the thirteenth century, sent preaching friars, the lay evangelists of the Middle Ages, into every parish and diocese, and gave back to the Mediæval Church the preaching power it had lost. It was not wonderful when such a new development of monastic life opened out such prospect of work to young and ardent spirits, that the brethren of the Val de Chou were looked upon as dwellers in a sleepy hollow, and did not make much progress. Mr. Macphail confesses somewhat sadly that his order was born out of due time, and a very slight knowledge of the spiritual movements of the day show how true the statement is.

The new instrument was the friar movement, led astray by its false idea of an external imitation of Christ, no doubt, but still able in the first flush of its life to stir many real revivals in Europe. The Dominicans met the Mohammedan pantheism by preaching and teaching, the Franciscans by their home-mission work in the larger towns of Europe. Francis found work to do as well as Dominic. The thirteenth century and the fourteenth were times of social revolution. The peasants, in some places free, in others serfs, were finding the forced services and various taxes and tithes too burdensome to bear, and were crowding into the poorly-built, badly-drained towns, where work was often scarce, famines came frequently, and the plague scarcely ever died out. Francis, the most sympathetic of souls, felt moved by the miseries of these poor towns-people, as Gerard Groot in the fifteenth century was moved by the suffering of the orphans of the Netherlands, or as Francke felt compassion for the woes of the children orphaned in the Thirty Years' War. The early Franciscans were organised to do home mission work in the towns, and in the early life of their order did noble work. Their poorhouses were usually built in the suburbs, where the wretched inhabitants who had fled from the country and had not burgher privileges were huddled together outside the walls. They set themselves

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more especially to look after those outcasts of mediæval society, the lepers. The Franciscans established lazar houses, and devoted themselves to tend and nurse the victims of this loathsome disease. To dress the wounds of a leper was often made the test of admission to the order.

These two great orders, with new rules, new aims of life, new ways of working adapted to the new social condition of the times, absorbed all the young and eager spirits anxious to serve God according to the best way that then offered; and an order like the Val de Chou, at best an easier adaptation of methods of Christian work which had long ago become antiquated, could have no future before it.

In Scotland, the brethren of Vallis Caulium had not to compete with new and attractive kinds of religious life like the Dominican and Franciscan orders, but even there the interesting ecclesiastical problem was one which the brethren of Pluscardyn could do very little to help to solve. Church historians have different opinions about the worth of the ecclesiastical revolution effected in Scotland by Margaret and her successors, but all are agreed that the question was between the Celtic ecclesiastical organisation and the Roman, between a form of Church rule originally adapted to people living in tribes and one based on settled land divisions, between a tribal and a parochial system of Church government. There was little real interest in the settlement of monks of the rule of Benedict, pure and simple, as at Dunfermline and Urquhart, or of the Benedict reformed after the pattern of Val de Chou. The real interest in the Church in Scotland was in the problem of tribe or parish, monastery or cathedral, abbot or bishop. The real question which Margaret and her sons and descendants had to face was this: Is an ecclesiastical organisation, originally constructed for and specially adapted to the circumstances of a people living in tribes, suitable when the old tribal life has in large measure died out, and the land is settled under one king? Or to put it more simply: Is a parochial system good or bad for Scotland? Margaret was no doubt full of prejudice in favour of the Mediæval Church in communion with Rome, and the ecclesiastical policy which her marvellous force of character impressed on her descendants was coloured by the same feelings; but we must never forget that the real ecclesiastical question in Scotland from Margaret down to Alexander III. was: Is Scotland to have a parish system of Church organisation—is the Scottish Church to be constructed on the principle that it is a congeries of parishes? Of course political questions entered into the decision. Malcolm Canmore and his successors were welding tribal Scotland into a compact kingdom, and the old tribal Church was a hindrance to politicians who were trying to overcome the tribal feeling and put national sentiment in its place. But the real ecclesiastical question was: Is Scotland to have a parochial system—a Church founded on divisions of land—a Church with a territorial as opposed to a congregational organisation? The territorial Church, as

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then known, was Episcopal and Roman, the congregational was monastic and Celtic; and the battle between the systems was a battle between Celtic and Roman Christianity. The Benedictines of Dunfermline and the brethren of Val de Chou in Pluscardyn, Beaulieu, and Ardoch, were doubtless used by these early Scottish kings to drive out the Celtic monks, to reduce their influence, and to obliterate their memory; but these monks and monasteries were not the greatest centres of influence in Scotland in the thirteenth century, and were not the chief representatives of the new order of things. If any one wished to point out the change in religious life going on in Scotland at the time of their foundation, he would not select as an example the Abbot of Dunfermline or the Prior of Pluscardyn, but the bishops and their growing power. The Bishop of Elgin, and not the Prior of Pluscardyn, was the type of the new order of things.

All this meant that the influence of these monasteries on the religious life of Scotland was, at least in the century of their foundation, of a secondary character. Further on, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, those religious houses did good service in education and in the preservation of literature, but in the thirteenth they were for the most part of minor importance. Their use was to displace monasteries and monks whose very presence was a protest against the parochial church which the rulers of the land were trying to establish on a firm basis.

Mr. Macphail has pointed out that all three priories of the brethren of the Val de Chou were founded in the same year under the auspices of the same king, Alexander II., and he has mentioned one or two reasons which have been suggested to account for this somewhat singular fact. One explanation, that Alexander himself had been in France and had become acquainted with the order, is dismissed; and another, that the brethren must have been attracting some attention in Rome during the period of Archbishop Malvoisin's sojourn there, is suggested. May not the reason of the selection be found in the fact that the constitutions of Val de Chou make provision expressly for the visitation of their priories by the bishop of the diocese, and that they were the order of monks most amenable to Episcopal supervision?

We have to thank Mr. Macphail for his laborious and learned book. The history of the Church in Scotland from the beginning of the twelfth century down to the end of the fifteenth is almost an unknown region, and such books as this on the religious house of Pluscardyn will do much to make us acquainted with that somewhat obscure but most interesting period.

T. M. LINDSAY.

## Notes of the Day.

A MONK-EVANGELIST.—Father Ignatius, as the well-known ultra-ritualist monk calls himself, has been holding evangelistic meetings in Edinburgh and other places. Not purely evangelistic, for the afternoon meetings were announced "for believers," while tickets ranging from half-a-crown to a shilling had to be paid for seats, unless one was content to be relegated to the remoter parts which were allocated for the poor. A middle-aged man, somewhat emaciated but full of life, with the dress and paraphernalia of a monk and a shaven crown, presented himself on the platform of Queen Street Hall, and began by announcing in the most ecstatic way what glorious times he was having, how near God was to him, how many souls had been converted, how many people were sending him thanksgivings and thankofferings, how Presbyterian ministers were thanking him for his splendid sermons, yet how utterly unconnected he was personally with the results, since the Lord only used him as an instrument. Indeed, he went on the principle of taking no thought what he should speak, but trusting that it would be given him of the Lord; and it was given him of the Lord, so that they might be truly said to have an inspired prophet of the Lord among them. His meetings, he said, embraced Catholics and Protestants, Free Church and Established Church, and all other sects and orders of men. He then broke out into a wild lament over the many empty seats, saying it was a shame and disgrace to Edinburgh not to rush to his meetings and share the glorious blessing. After singing and prayer, he began an earnest and simple address from the text, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." He dwelt clearly and impressively on the salvation of Christ as a *present* salvation, and made fervent and effective appeals to his audience to accept of Him in that capacity. After a considerable time, some of his audience began to go out—a circumstance that greatly discomposed him. First he remonstrated with them for being tired of such doctrine; then, getting more excited, he burst into a thanksgiving, praising God that he was obviously working by Him, inasmuch as the truth was rousing the opposition of its enemies, and those who hated it were leaving. He then passionately entreated all to leave who disliked the truth, and several rose at his word. Anew he thanked God. To us, in our simplicity, it appeared that if the people had shown themselves impressed by the truth, it would have been better cause for thanksgiving. In all this the wounded vanity of the man was but too apparent, and the profession of thankfulness had a revolting look. He said that there was nothing he would like better than to bring all professing Christians

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together on the ground of a simple love for Jesus. He would delight to attend early mass with the Roman Catholics, take the communion in the forenoon with the Episcopalians, worship with the Established Church in the afternoon, and the Free Church in the evening, and attend a meeting of the Salvation Army next day. Father Ignatius has an extensive following; many carriages were at the door of the meeting, and some persons of undoubted excellence and piety think highly of his addresses. It is impossible for us to have confidence in one who, though full of evangelistic sincerity, is manifestly so erratic, and in many ways so weak. The charge at the door contrasted with the practice at Mr. Moody's meetings, where even a plate for voluntary offerings was not to be seen. We would always make great allowance for errors and eccentricities where there is genuine zeal, but Father Ignatius outstretches our charity. Of all forms of evangelism, Monastic evangelism in these days is the last to be thought of.

WHAT BECOMES OF THE INFIDEL LEADERS?—A very striking leaflet has been printed under this title by the Rev. C. J. Whitmore, a Presbyterian minister in London. He says that during the last thirty years of his ministerial life in London he has come into contact with twenty of the leading lecturers on the side of unbelief. Of these twenty, he maintains that sixteen have left their infidelity—have turned to Christianity, and openly professed their belief in its facts and teachings. The initials of the sixteen are subjoined, and a brief notice of each case. We understand that the history of the statement is as follows:—An excellent and devoted lady, a member of the Presbyterian Church in London, works with unwearied assiduity among an important class of working people, and got the fact made known among them. It was repeated from the pulpit of an eminent preacher of the Church of England, and seems to have been carried to Mr. Bradlaugh, by whom, or by some of his people, the alleged state of the fact was denied. Mr. Whitmore hereupon went into detail in every case, giving initials and history, as in the leaflet. We have not heard that in this form the accuracy of his statement has been questioned. The list is headed by T. C.; and it would be hard indeed to deny that "this most talented leader of infidelity was well known as a lecturer at the Hall of Science. But he became converted, and is now far more widely known as a lecturer on Christian Evidences." The other histories are similar. The phenomenon is a remarkable proof how hard it is for men to kick against the pricks. When will Mr. Bradlaugh himself listen to the voice from heaven, and begin to preach the doctrine which he has so long seemed to despise?

THE LATE REV. DUGALD M'COLL.—The death of this able minister has been noted very widely. Two reasons induce us to dwell on it; first, because Mr. M'Coll in his early years was the means of carrying out very successfully an important branch of Presbyterian Gospel work; and second, because he was a contributor to these pages. The branch

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of work with which his name was associated in the early years of his ministry was the reclamation of the lapsed. The "Wynd Church" in Glasgow, of which he was the first minister, was a very interesting and successful enterprise, conducted on the territorial principle in one of the worst districts of Glasgow. It was the mother church of a series of churches of the like character and aim, which have had a sensible influence for good in the great community of the western metropolis. For a considerable time Mr. McColl was a minister in London. His contributions to this journal were on a subject that at first sight might seem at the very opposite pole from evangelistic operations. They bore on the subject of King Arthur and the Round Table. But besides that Mr. McColl was naturally deeply interested in the early British Church and its powerful evangelistic character, he was of opinion that there ran through the Arthurian history and legends a much more decided thread of Christianity than was generally believed. To bring out his views on that subject was the purpose of his communications, and the originality and independence of his mind was very apparent in what he wrote. Whether he could be said to have proved all that was in his own convictions, he at least opened an interesting vista in a fascinating period of old English history, fitted to invite others and, perhaps, elicit more light on a subject of acknowledged obscurity.

**ALLEGED DECAY OF PREACHING.**—The newspapers have again taken up this subject, set on thereto by the recent publication on the subject by Professor Mahaffy. It is a discussion which seems to come round as regularly as any great social or political question. And nothing can be easier than to bring a great many good accusations against the preaching of this day. No doubt there are a great many very poor preachers, and no doubt, too, there are but few that come up to the full requirements of the day. But these facts do not settle the question. That question is, Are there more very poor preachers and fewer very good preachers than there were a generation or two back? In answer to these questions, it might perhaps be maintained that there are not so many great preachers, but most certainly it could not be maintained that there are more who are very poor. The fact is, that in looking back on a past age, as in looking on a distant place, we are subject to this condition, that the smaller objects do not attract notice, and the larger fill the eye. We think of the few great preachers that flourished then; we do not think of the great multitude of very ordinary preachers. In looking around us, we see the ordinary preacher—too much, perhaps; and we are apt to conclude that there has been a decay of preaching. We do not think that there has been a decay; but we do think that the great mass of preachers take their work far too easily, and do not strive, as they should, after higher power. To turn men from sin to God is a gigantic work; to gain the young, convert the worldly, rouse the inert, cheer the disconsolate, counteract the mighty influences of scepticism, worldliness, greed, pride, passion—what a business this is!

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Two things are most essential ; more fitness in the instrument, and more fulness of divine power working through it.

THE CULTIVATION OF MUSIC.—Various indications have presented themselves of late that a great stride is likely to be made in the United Kingdom in the cultivation of music. This in itself no one can fail to welcome and rejoice in. Yet it is obvious that there are moral snares connected with the cultivation of music, and especially devotional music. The proverb might be used of music that is applicable to fire and water—it is a good servant but an ill master. The culture of music is liable to become an idolatry, and in some cases an idolatry of the musician. In divine worship, there is a risk lest the music, which is intended only as a vehicle of devotion, as a means of honouring God, become a source of glory to the performer, and of pleasure to the so-called worshipper. To keep music in its own place in worship is a task of no ordinary difficulty. But it is a task needing to be very faithfully performed in those days when music is receiving a more honourable place in the service of the sanctuary. Apart from worship, music presents a delightful means of brightening labour, of refreshing the dull, dusty ways of monotonous toil. Here its help is greatly needed. Christian people, not themselves toiling for a living in the sweat of their face, do not make sufficient allowance for the monotony and cheerlessness of ordinary toil. "In all England," it has been said, "industry has no note to make any human creature glad." Social life is not brightening under our system of big factories, long chimneys, and crowded, squalid towns. The gospel is the great brightener of human life. But music, under divine influence, may contribute an important share.

## American Notes.

DR. GARRETT—A COLOURED AMBASSADOR.—A few months ago there sailed from New York the first of the negro race that the United States Government had ever yet appointed to the high office of minister to an independent country. The last official act of President Garfield was signing the commission of Dr. H. H. Garrett as minister to Liberia ; and now comes the sorrowful news of Dr. Garrett's death a few weeks ago at Liberia, where he had landed in December. Dr. Garrett was born in slavery, but having escaped in boyhood, had not only acquired a good education, but had become a minister of the Presbyterian Church. A man of considerable ability and high personal character, he was practically the leader of the coloured people, and had gone to Liberia to aid in the upbuilding of that young republic. There, as an experienced and successful Christian pastor and educationist, he

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might have rendered services to his own people such as none other could render, but the land of his fathers has given him a too early grave.

**THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS.**—It is by no means a settled point whether, as a rule, students for the ministry should be encouraged to study for money prizes awarded as the result of competitive examinations in specified subjects, the money thus obtained being nearly sufficient to meet expenses; or whether those needing assistance should receive free gifts—grants-in-aid—called in this country “scholarships,” not “bursaries,” as in Great Britain. Our people do not trouble themselves so much about *how* a certain thing is done, as that the thing be done. They need ministers—educated ministers; and if students for the ministry need help, they must get it. As a rule the American Churches aid their theological students by these free gifts; and the work of the various “education boards” is to collect the gifts of their Churches for this purpose, and then to distribute them as wisely as possible. Every now and again we have a cry about the surplusage of ministers, and an assertion that these boards are really not needed.

Perhaps it is true that there is in the United States a larger number of persons who have been ordained to the ministry, who yet are not in the pastorate, than in any other country in the world. But this does not prove that there are too many ministers. It only shows that in this country a large number of persons, many of whom ought never to have been in the ministry, have drifted out of it. Had these persons studied in Great Britain, they would, for the most part, have turned aside during their student career, and become teachers, literary men, and such like. Here they have simply completed their collegiate course, and then engaged in other than pastorate work. The truth is, we sadly need more ministers and more students; and hence these Education Boards are doing a very important work. Nor is it true, though their aid is not given for scholarship, that they aid only the weaklings, who had better been left to perish. The statistics of the Churches refute this statement.

The Education Board of the Presbyterian Church North, has just presented a report of the present results of its work. It appears that in 1881 there were 5086 ministers on the roll of the General Assembly North. Of these, the Board had aided financially 1791. Out of this number, 835, or almost one-half, are pastors over congregations, and 406 stated supplies—that is, ordained men in charge of congregations, and doing pastoral work, but not installed as pastors. To these we must add 27 who are home missionaries—brethren doing frontier mission work under the Home Mission Board, and 61 who are missionaries in the foreign field, making no less than 1323, or almost three-fourths of the whole number that had been aided by the Church, now repaying her by faithful service in her ranks. The Board notes the career of all it aids, and accounts thus for the remainder:—60 are professors in

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colleges or seminaries; 8 are chaplains in various institutions; 7 are editors of religious journals; 3 are secretaries to different of the Boards of the Church: 9 are agents, collecting money for educational and similar objects; 11 are superintendents; 45 are self-styled evangelists, "go-as-they-please" men—brethren that move, like comets, in eccentric orbits; 27 are unattached, being in transit from one field of labour to another; 64 have honourably retired from the active duties of the ministry; 2 are librarians; and 129 are the alone unemployed out of the whole number, for 69 are still licentiates.

To qualify a student for receiving aid from the Board, he must be recommended by some Presbytery, and then must be certified by the professors of whatever seminary he attends as at least "medium" in the class standing. (Theological students are examined at the close of each session on the work done by them, and receive certificates according to their answering.) If the Board be satisfied, a grant of \$100 or \$125 is made, and the remainder needful for the student's support must be provided by himself.

MORMONISM.—At last a forward move has been made by the Government in dealing with this system. In so far as it is a religious system, Mormonism cannot be touched; but as the moral sense of the country revolts from its polygamous practices, a bill has passed through both Senate and House of Representatives by majorities of 199 against 42, and been already signed by the President, that, without mentioning Mormonism, strikes it a heavy blow. This bill declares polygamy in any of the territories of the Union to be a misdemeanour, and that polygamists shall not be entitled to vote in Utah, or be eligible for office in the territory. Still, it is by no means certain that the Mormons will not be able to do—as O'Connell boasted he could do with any Act of Parliament—drive a coach and four through it. The bill may not go far enough, but it shows that the blood of the country is at last up; and if this measure be not sufficient, there will be another one going farther next year.

THE CHINESE.—The population of the United States is more than 50,000,000. The immigration last year from Europe was over 700,000. The immigration this year is expected to be far in excess of that of 1881; so that the Western States are already rejoicing in the prospect of a large increase of settlers. In the midst of this general gladness, one piercing shriek of terror fills the air: "The Chinese, the heathen Chinese, are coming," and in hot haste a bill is hurried through Congress to keep them out. The population of China is supposed to be some 400,000,000. What would become of us if all these people should come over to these States in a body? We should be demoralised, and, losing the little Christianity we have, be turned into heathens, while our present churches and cathedrals and temples would be converted into so many joss-houses. Wages would fall, owing to this overwhelming influx of labourers, and we should all starve—the "American me-

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chanic" becoming like the Dodo or Great Auk, an extinct species. Nor is this danger altogether imaginary. There are at present, according to the census returns, 110,000 Chinese in the United States; and so Dennis Kearney, of San Francisco, says that, in the interest of religion and of labour, the Chinese must go! And Dennis Kearney finds a majority of the Congress and a majority of the Senate of the United States doing his bidding, and passing a bill that enacts that for the next twenty years no Chinese mechanics or manual labourers of any class shall be allowed to enter this country! Shame—not on the wretched demagogue who raised this cry, but on the men of education and intelligence who support such a bill, that they may curry favour with voters on the Pacific slope. A bill somewhat similar once reached President Hayes. He promptly vetoed it; and I trust that before these lines shall be printed, President Arthur will have vetoed this one.

A NEW THEOLOGICAL PROFESSOR.—Dr. Park has retired from his Chair of Theology at Andover Seminary. He has taught for thirty-five years. His Calvinism was not very stiff; still it was, perhaps, as strong as Andover cared for. A successor has been found in Dr. Newman Smyth, Presbyterian minister in Illinois, known for his books entitled "Old Faiths in New Light," and "The Orthodox Theology of To-day." The appointment has not been received with entire approbation. Dr. Smyth's anchor, it is said, is aboard ship, so that it is not quite certain where he may finally come to moor. However, as a position of responsibility sometimes sobers a man, and helps to keep him inside the traces, it may be that the duties of his office may develop more of the Conservative in Dr. Smyth than he now gets credit for possessing.

G. D. MATHEWS.

#### THE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIANS AND THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION.

OUR readers will remember that at the Philadelphia meeting of the Council of the Alliance, there was some discussion respecting the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. A minister of that Church, stating that he had been appointed by his General Assembly, claimed a seat in the Council. No doubt was thrown on his word, but there was no official intimation from the Church. It was urged by some that no such document was required, as every "Presbyterian Church" was entitled to membership, and to send delegates. To this it was objected, that the Council was not a General Convention, but a meeting of delegates, and that these could be sent only by Churches whose membership in the Alliance had been acknowledged.

After discussion, the Council decided that there was not time at the date when the matter came before it, to consider the relation of the Cumberland Church to the Constitution, and passed on to the next item of business.

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During the brief discussion, it was held by some that a Church "Presbyterian" in polity was qualified for admission, while others held that the membership being limited to churches adhering to the consensus of the Reformed Confessions, a doctrinal test was imposed.

In view of that discussion, it may be interesting to some to know that at its meeting last May, the General Assembly of the Cumberland Church appointed a committee to revise its Confession of Faith and Catechism, which are substantially reprints of those of Westminster, except in the passages that speak of or refer to Divine sovereignty. In these, sweeping alterations had been made, the Cumberland Church alleging that on this subject the teaching of the Westminster Confession is simply fatalism.

The Committee was instructed *not* to prepare a new Confession, but to revise the present one, and, that the work might be in as perfect a form as possible by next Assembly, a second committee was appointed to revise the revised version.

These committees, each consisting of three members, have recently published the results of their labours in a pamphlet, and dividing the number of its pages by the number of days the committees were in session, we find that each committee spent about two days and a-half on revising the Confession and Catechism!

Considering the number of changes proposed in their report, practically a rewriting of both works, we question if as much literary work has ever yet been done in as limited a time.

On opening the report we find that the time-honoured division of the Confession into chapters and sections has been abandoned. In place of this we have 115 paragraphs or articles, numbered consecutively with headings in small-capital type, that are supposed to give the main subject of groups of the Articles.

Among the reasons given by the committee for their making of the revision are the following:—

"5. *Discrepancy of Doctrinal Statements.*—The great central doctrine of the Westminster Confession is that of universal foreordination. The logical cognates are unconditional election and reprobation, limited atonement, and a corresponding limitation of Divine influence. The compilers of our (Cumberland) Confession were not in a condition to do much more than expunge the more boldly defined statements of distinctive Westminsterism, and to make counter statements. This is no matter of surprise, for it is simply impossible to eliminate distinctive Calvinism from the old (Westminster) Confession by merely expunging here and there a word, or clause, or sentence, or a section, and then attempt to fill the gap with a counter-statement, for the evil is not here or there, but everywhere. Hence the doctrinal statements require to be largely rewritten. No one doubts that our (Cumberland) compilers did intend to deny universal foreordination, unconditional election and reprobation, limited atonement, and the partial influence of the Holy Spirit. Our (Cumberland) pulpit and press have faithfully and prominently from first to last reflected this intention of the compilers. Traces of Westminsterism are discoverable in many parts of our (Cumberland) Confession—notably Chap. V., sects. 3, 4; Chap. VIII., sect. 1. The last-cited section is a slight modification of the old (Westminster) Confession, but when analysed teaches limitarianism nearly or quite as strongly as does the old.

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Chapter IX. gives the philosophy of universal foreordination in every essential respect, just as the Westminster Confession, which, as formerly stated, is the philosophy of necessity. The same philosophy pervades Chap. X.; Chap. XI. sects. 3, 4, teaches, by necessary inference, a limited atonement."

This is very frank and explicit. It does justice to the logical unity of the teachings of the Westminster Confession. It also declares that what the committees call "distinctive Westminsterism" is an EVIL—such an one that the Cumberland Church must get rid of it, even though the doctrinal statements of their present Confession must be largely rewritten. That Church is therefore travelling—not toward, but away from, "Westminsterism." The committees do not claim that their Church is one doctrinally with the other Presbyterian or Reformed Churches. On the contrary, they claim, and, as we shall see, very successfully prove, that they are not one with them on the central theme of their respective Confessions.

Another reason for revision is, that the Confession and Catechism are "too long, unnecessarily diffuse, and tedious." They therefore reduce the Shorter Catechism from 107 questions to 105 in the revised version. The reduction is measurable; while yet another change is the existing order of the subjects.

"The order of the subjects in our (Cumberland) Confession is the same as in the Westminster. This is a logical presentation of limitarian theology, but is inconsistent with our system of doctrines. For this reason we propose a change in the order of subjects." The committee therefore rewrite Chapter III.; alter Chapter V.; rewrite the Chapter on *Effectual Calling*, and call it "Divine Influence;" follow this by a chapter on Repentance unto Life; this again by one on Saving Faith; then comes Sanctification—meaning by this "an unreserved consecration of the whole man to God;" then Regeneration, followed by chapters on Justification, Adoption, Growth in Grace, Good Works, Preservation of Believers, &c., &c.

Our space will not allow of our making extracts from the committees' version of the Confession, but our readers can judge of the alterations made in the Shorter Catechism (the Larger Catechism forms no part of the doctrinal standards of the Church) from the answers supplied to several of the questions.

"Ques. 11. What are God's works of providence?"

"Ans. God's works of providence are His preserving, and so governing His creatures and overruling their actions as to manifest His wisdom, power, and goodness in promoting their welfare.

"Ques. 16. What effect did Adam's sin have upon his posterity?"

"Ans. Adam's sin corrupted his moral nature, and alienated him from God; and all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, inherit his corruption of nature, and become subject to sin and death.

"Ques. 17. Into what estate did the Fall bring mankind?"

"Ans. The Fall brought mankind into an estate of alienation from God, which is moral death."

The well-known Question 18 of the Westminster Catechism, "Wherein

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consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?" is entirely omitted by the Committees, and no substitute of any kind offered for it.

The question, "How does the Holy Spirit apply to us the redemption purchased by Christ," is answered thus:—

"The Holy Spirit applies to us the merits of Christ's death by taking of the things that are Christ's, and showing them unto us, and thus enabling us to believe to the saving of the soul."

"What is Effectual Calling?" is also dropped, and in place we have the following:—

"*Ques.* 30. What is the work of the Holy Spirit?"

"*Ans.* The work of the Holy Spirit is to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; to regenerate, comfort, and guide those who trust in Christ."

The Committee place sanctification before justification; but then, "sanctification is the consecration of the whole man to God, and his service is of the ability which God gives, and is the beginning of the new life of faith in Christ;" while the old question, "What is Sanctification?" is replaced by "What is Growth in Grace?"

"*Ans.* To grow in grace is to increase in the knowledge of spiritual things; to come to a deeper consciousness of our moral frailties, and of our need of God's sustaining grace, by which alone we are enabled more fully to surrender ourselves to Christ, restrain our passions, and rejoice in the assurance that all things work together for our ultimate good."

The Committee answer the question, "What does God require that we may escape the punishment due for sin?" by saying—

"To escape the punishment due for sin, God requires of us repentance toward Him, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ."

The next question is, "What is repentance toward God?"

"*Ans.* Repentance toward God is that grace whereby the sinner, out of the true sense of his guilt, with grief and hatred of sin turns from it,"—

while this is followed, not preceded, as in the Westminster Catechism, by the question, "What is faith in Jesus Christ?"

These extracts are sufficient to show what the theological position of the Cumberland Church is, if represented by these Committees. What action the Assembly may take on the report remains to be seen; and meanwhile, only the Committees are responsible for these statements.

G. D. MATHEWS.

## General Survey.

### GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

#### SCOTCH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES.

*Efforts for Foreign Missions.*—The Established Church has been making most energetic efforts by deputations, by exchange of pulpits, by meetings with office-bearers, by public meetings, and otherwise, to increase the interest in and the contributions to its Foreign Mission Scheme. Though not on the same scale, it is notable that there have been movements of a similar kind in other Churches, both Scotch and English, as if there were a widespread feeling that in this matter some new "departure," as they say, was needed.

Half-a-century ago, too much could not be made of a missionary. Wherever he appeared there was no limit to the idolising and lionising. But missionaries have become common, and people have gone to the other extreme. The greatness of their self-sacrifice and the nobleness of their work are not estimated as they should be. Think of the contrast between your money contribution, which does not take from you almost a single comfort, and the life of a missionary among the cruel and degraded savages and the fever miasmata of Nyassa or Nyanza, hearing only at distant intervals from home, toiling wearily on for months, or it may be years, without any fruit appearing. The last number of the *Missionary Record* of the Church of Scotland informs us that all the members of the Blantyre Mission have suffered this season from fever, and that Mr. Scott, the new head of the mission, has been down with the African plague five times in two months and a-half. Besides, the Makololo are at war, have been perpetrating horrid cruelties, have even attacked a convoy of the Messrs. Moir (near neighbours of the mission), and murdered two of the party. But at Blantyre they are in good heart notwithstanding. The school does well, and a group of dependent villages is gathering round them.

There is nothing so hopeful for the Church as a right spirit in its divinity halls. And it is cheering to hear that of the young men just closing their long course of training for the ministry, in the College of the Free Church, Edinburgh, ten—among them some of the ablest in the college—have intimated their readiness to accept calls to the foreign mission field, and it is already all but arranged that two of them go to South Africa, one to China, one to the Jews, and two to the Colonies. This college has had a larger attendance this session than during the last twenty-five years. Upwards of 140 students were matriculated, of whom about thirty were from other Churches, especially the Continent and the Colonies.

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The "Public Funds" of the United Presbyterian Church for 1881 amount to £98,640, an increase of £23,000 over 1879. For Foreign Missions the contributions are nearly £34,000, £3000 more than last year, notwithstanding a deficiency in legacies (so we understand) of twice that sum.

The death is announced of Mrs. Anderson, wife of one of the Old Calabar missionaries. She had laboured with her husband in that trying West African climate for more than thirty-four years, in various ways a real and blessed power. Her memory, we may well believe, will long be cherished by the savage people to whose highest well-being she devoted herself, and that all the more that she had made their country her home, and died as well as lived among them.

## CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

*The Propagation Society.*—This society gives its income for the year as £138,000—an increase of £4000. Of this, £85,000 belongs to the general fund, and £53,000 to "special and appropriated funds." The latter sum does not please the secretary of the society and Canon Gregory, and a very strong effort is being made to arrest or diminish a tendency which threatens to make the central authority a mere agency for transmitting contributions to schemes over which it has no control. But there seems to be a feeling abroad that things are not well managed. One writer in the *Guardian* gives the case of a missionary deputy in his district making £22 for the society, at a cost in expenses of £15. Great complaint, too, is made of the Colonial bishops, some of whom are supported, or partly supported, by the "Propagation." Some two-and-twenty of these are now in England, looking out, it almost seems to be suggested, for good livings and suffraganships. They are rather wickedly designated "Returned-empties," and "Aquila" in the *Guardian* intimates that he means to send his contributions henceforth only to special-fund bishops, who have worked for the longest time, and seem to be most in need of help. A "Returned-empty," however, responds that Colonial bishops, if they were fairly treated, should oftener be elevated to English Sees, and that it is no advantage to the Church to keep an enfeebled man in a foreign charge. But the number of the "returned" seems very large; and one does not see why a bishop should not spend his days in Australia or South Africa. Would not Selwyn have been a more potent missionary name if its owner had died a Maori bishop?

*The Church Missionary Society.*—This society calculates its income for the year at £207,000. Its general fund amounts to £190,000; an evident indication of confidence on the part of the contributors. This great income is chiefly drawn from about a third of the parishes of England and Wales—5370 out of 15,700. In these there are 3660 associations. During the year 1881 no less than 7500 sermons were preached, and 3000 meetings were held in behalf of the society. Tak-

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ing the English counties alone, the sermons brought in £34,500 ; meetings, £9250 ; while from donations there came £10,000 ; from subscriptions, £35,200 ; and from missionary-boxes, £18,000. The rate of giving with reference to the population is very various. Westmoreland is as high as 33s. for every 100 of the population of the county, and Staffordshire only reaches 4s. 3d. All the counties of England have increased their contributions during the last thirty years, but 5 ; 14 have increased over 100 per cent., with an average increase of 143 per cent. ; 9 have increased over 50 per cent., with an average increase of 69 per cent. ; 13 have increased over 5 per cent., with an average increase of 30 per cent. ; 3 have remained stationary ; 2 have decreased. On the whole, while the population of these 41 counties has increased during the last three decades 40 per cent., the Church Missionary contributions have increased over 70 per cent. The gross income of the society in the same period has doubled itself. Though the majority of the clergy—an increasing majority perhaps—sympathise with the S.P.G., which most of the bishops favour, the old evangelical society is still far a-head. Here is a notable fact. In Sussex, 230 parishes support the Propagation and 120 the Church Missionary, but the contributions of the 120 are double those of the 230. If the evangelical party has not the freshness and vigour of forty years ago ; if it is lacking in names of commanding influence ; if there are too many indications of a disposition to trim with ritualism, it is plainly still a real power in the Church of England. But for the want of strong and capable leaders, and some inability to assert itself, bishops and other dignitaries would not dare to speak as they do of the Church Association. Even as it is, the Church Missionary Society alone, managed by twenty-four laymen—most successfully managed—and quite independent (except in the matter of getting ordination for its men),—is an important check on ultra-Episcopal claims. It may be an ecclesiastical anomaly, but we hope it will still continue to regard with suspicion all the efforts of Convocation, however plausibly disguised, to bring it under the control of the bishops. It is not to be forgotten that at this time every Episcopal Church in the world—any exception is hardly worth mentioning—is either profoundly sacerdotal, or is moving more and more decisively in that direction.

*Salvation Army.*—The Salvation Army attracts to itself ever-increasing attention. Especially the clergy of the English Church are interested in it. Bitterly regretting the treatment which Methodism met with in the last century, they are most anxious to draw under Church influence this singular movement. A rubric in the prayer-book forbids the admission to communion of any one who has not been confirmed, and requires the name of every proposing communicant to be given beforehand to the clergyman ; but the Archbishop of York, without any regard to the injunction, lately allowed the communion to be administered to “a heterogeneous company of persons of whom he knew nothing”—

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members of the Salvation Army—in one of his churches. No wonder the complaint is made that bishops break the law at their pleasure, and no harm comes to them; while poor clergy, when they do wrong, are thrown into prison. But apart from this, the Churches should well consider the question of how to act by the new sect. An Anglican clergyman intimates that he has interviewed General Booth, and that the General wishes to be attached as an ally to the Church of England. But of what nature is the alliance to be? There is seen to be great need of caution. There is far from a general approval of Dr. Thomson's action. The general idea seems to be that the clergy should be careful to abstain from anything like direct opposition; that they should keep their eyes open, and be ready to direct and utilise any religious interest the Salvationists may awaken.

*Æsthetes at Oxford.*—Oxonian "athletes" are much put out by an apparition among them of a strange and perplexing kind. On the banks of the Isis, and in the squares of their ancient University, are to be seen youths of effeminate gait and bearing, "long-haired and velvet-coated," in "wondrous coloured ties," with "lilies in their mediæval hands." The apostles of culture they call themselves. "A parcel of loafers," say the cricketers and boaters, and they will have none of them. Neither do the "heads and tutors" love æsthetes. And it is said they are getting rather rough treatment. A party of athletes lately paid an unwelcome visit to an undergraduate æsthete, and with a pair of long shears relieved him of his flowing locks. The Harvard students managed better. At Mr. Oscar Wilde's lecture at Boston, they appeared right before him in his own "æsthetic" costume. We may boast as we will of our "culture," but after all it is a poor safeguard against eccentricities and extravagances, against fantastic opinions and silly practices, and much worse.

*Church Attendance.*—Comparing the Church attendance, so far as the returns permit, of 1881 with 1851, a *Nonconformist* correspondent finds that in sixteen towns, with a population of nearly 2,000,000, there has been an increase during the last 30 years of 30 per cent., a percentage, however, greatly under that of the population. The Church increase is 20 per cent., the Nonconformist increase is 25 per cent., and the Roman Catholic increase is 42 per cent. The Congregationalists have apparently decreased, but the decrease is slight, and no doubt is more than accounted for by the "whip" in 1851, which made the Churches much fuller than the average. Still, it is the fact that while the Church and other Nonconformists are up, even with the disadvantage referred to, it is otherwise with this important body of Dissenters. Has a Broad Church Gospel nothing to do with it?

*Lay Preachers.*—The reader of a paper in the Salop Association of Independent Churches informs us that there has been, "especially of late years, a gradual diminution of lay preachers" among English Congregationalists. Fears are entertained that some of the village chapels

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and mission stations will have to be closed. It is plain that in all Churches, if Christianity is to advance or even hold its ground, the laity must throw themselves into Church work with earnestness and vigour. Something more is needed than their money, their countenance, and their reputable living.

The Congregational Union of London is working very earnestly, by mission halls, evangelistic services, and church extension, to get hold of the "lapsed masses." One gentleman offers £5000 for a Sites Fund, if he is met by contributions amounting to £9000,—£10,000 if £18,000 are raised by others. The same liberal giver promises £100 to each of twenty mission halls which it is proposed to erect. The Congregationalist Jubilee Fund is now over £120,000.

*Tithes.*—The Tithe question is becoming a burning one in England. To what is called "Extraordinary Tithe" there is a deep and determined opposition. The payment of that was recently refused by a Mr. Tyman, of "Witherden Farm, Ticehurst." Notice of distraint was then served on him, and at the close of the legal period "an auctioneer, two bailiffs, and a policeman" made their appearance at the farm to make a seizure for the Church. There were stacks, oxen, waggons, carts, but the minister of the law determined to have a pair of horses, which were needed for "harrowing the Lent corn." It ended in a regular battle. The bailiffs, at first beaten, returned with a larger force, and carried off the spoil they wished; but not without a struggle, in which the farmer was laid prostrate.

*Churches in Ireland.*—In Ireland, while Episcopalians and Roman Catholics have decreased during the last decade, Congregationalists have increased fully 33 per cent.

*Baptists.*—Earl Nelson, a well-meaning if not a very wise or a very able man, seems to think he has a mission to bring back the English Dissenters to the Church of England. Not disheartened by some former efforts, he has just had a field-day with the Baptists in the Wiltshire village of Bowerchalke. The meeting was held in a large barn. It was presided over by the vicar of the parish, and not fewer than 500 persons were present. His Lordship opened the discussion by reading a long paper; and was replied to by Mr. Collyer, a Baptist minister, whom the *Guardian* actually designates as "Rev." Then, after some of the neighbouring vicars and some Baptist laymen had spoken, Mr. Otley, the Principal of Salisbury Theological College, addressed the meeting in support of Lord Nelson's views, in a somewhat misty and inconclusive harangue, which was dealt with by Mr. Short, another Baptist minister of the neighbourhood. We do not suppose any converts were made to Anglicanism. It would not afford much light to a Baptist's mind to be told that baptism puts children "in a state of salvation," but that they still required "renewal by the Holy Ghost." Nor does the *Guardian* make matters any clearer by saying that children are all "regenerated" in baptism, but that a "change of state" is not "re-

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newal." As Canon Mozley said long ago, either something or nothing is meant by baptismal "regeneration"; but to this day Anglicans seem unable to say which. The account given of the meeting by a correspondent of the *Church Times* would lead one to think that the Baptists had the best of it. He says the arguments were very "damaging to the weaker brethren"; that "the evening was one of misery to Churchmen"; and that the experiment ought never to be repeated of "casting pearls before swine."

*Wesleyan Church.*—The Wesleyan statistics for the year, it is believed, will turn out to be very favourable. They will probably show a greater increase of members than for some years past. Revival services, we are told, have done much to "awaken and strengthen the Churches."

## I T A L Y.

DEATH OF DR. ROBERTSON—DEATH OF BONAVENTURA MAZZARELLA—THE SO-CALLED  
RECANTATIONS OF MEDICI AND LANZA—GENERAL STATISTICS OF EVANGELICAL  
CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS—INCREASED CIRCULATION OF SCRIPTURES AND TRACTS—  
A NEW CHURCH IN VENICE.

I COULD not begin this letter otherwise than by referring to the great loss which the Waldensian Church has sustained by the death of the Rev. Dr. William Robertson, of Greyfriars, in Edinburgh. True, those that saw him at our last Synod could not but perceive that his frame was greatly shattered; but his mind and his heart remained the same as ever, imparting to a greatly weakened body a fire and a strength that had in them something really wonderful. His speech to the Synod, in very elegant French, was as lucid and as vigorous as any of his former ones; but, if the sword was more flashing than ever, the scabbard was so worn that it could keep the blade a prisoner no longer. Nevertheless, the news of his death was received with very great grief amongst us. Dr. Robertson was not a new friend to the Vaudois. His great interest in them began when he paid a first visit to their mountains about forty years ago. From that day to that of his death he never ceased to take every opportunity that offered to make known to his countrymen the little Alpine Church, from which, like other men of equal faith with his own, he expected great things for the religious future of Italy. In 1865, he was one of a small party of Scotch deputies of various Churches to the Waldensian Synod, who, in a little room of the Hotel de l'Ours, at Torre Pellice, bound themselves by a solemn promise to help the Waldensian Church as long as God gave them life. The others were the late Dr. Guthrie, Dr. A. Thomson, of Edinburgh, and Dr. MacEwan, of Glasgow, who also has gone to his rest. The result of their united efforts was the "Waldensian Aid Society," which has been, and is still doing, so much to help the missionary work of the Waldensian Church in Italy. It is not necessary to repeat here what has been said before, in this same place, of the very active part Dr. Robertson has taken, in these last years, in the realisation of the

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scheme which has resulted in a good increase of the salary of our poor mountain pastors. He was deservedly the bearer of the good news of that great success at our last Synod, as he had been the first to propose the scheme several years before. His name will long be associated in the grateful remembrance of the Vaudois with those of Beckwith, Gilly, Guthrie, Stewart, and so many others.

Another death must also be registered in this review of Italian affairs, that of one of the most remarkable and eminent of Roman Catholic converts to the Gospel, the Hon. Bonaventura Mazzarella, a member for many years of the Italian Parliament, a judge in a high position, a philosopher of no small merit, but, above all, an eloquent and faithful minister of the Gospel. He was born in 1818, at Gallipoli, in South Italy, and having studied the profession of the law, became a judge under the Bourbon Government. The part he took in political affairs, when the Bourbons proclaimed a constitution which they hastened to forswear at the first opportunity, obliged him to fly to Athens, from which he wrote a noble letter taking all the responsibility on himself to free his companions. He was then sentenced to death, although he had only acted according to the constitution given by his sovereign. But when a king sends his ministers to the galleys, men of inferior rank need not look for justice. From Athens, Mazzarella retired to Piedmont, and it was there that he came to the knowledge of the Gospel. He was received into the communion of the Waldensian Church, with three other new converts, the very day on which was laid the foundation-stone of the beautiful temple of that denomination in Turin. He then went to Geneva for a while, and on his return to Italy was placed by the Waldensian Table in Genoa as evangelist, side by side with the Rev. Mr. Geymonat. Unhappily the enemy sowed dissension in the field. The two flourishing Waldensian missions of Genoa and Turin were for a long time crippled in their development by a schism, produced by Plymouthistic tendencies and tenets. Desanctis and Mazzarella were the leaders of the dissenting party, and for several years, from conscientious motives, no doubt, pursued a mission apart from, and somewhat antagonistic to, that of the Waldensians. The bitter feelings of those days are now a thing of the past, and almost forgotten. Both Mazzarella and Desanctis afterwards abandoned their extreme Plymouthistic views. Desanctis went back to the Waldensian Church in 1864, and died a professor in the Theological School of Florence, and Mazzarella of late years had joined the union of the Free Churches of Italy, by which he was greatly honoured. Although a professed evangelical, Government called him first to a chair of philosophy in the University of Bologna, then made him a judge of the Court of Appeal in Genoa. His countrymen of Gallipoli persisted in sending him to Parliament, election after election, as their representative. A short time before his death he had resigned his seat, on account of his health, but he was re-elected by an immense majority, although he was at the time lying ill far away in

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Genoa. In the Chamber of Deputies he belonged to the Left, but was rather looked upon, not as a party man, but as a *solitaire*, who keeps himself independent from party engagements. He seldom spoke, but he had a knack of interspersing the discussion with witty and well-timed interruptions and remarks, in which he gave free expression to his views and feelings of the moment. All his colleagues, and the press likewise, united at his death in rendering a touching testimony to the nobility of his character, the purity of his life, and his loving heart. The President of the Chamber, in announcing his departure, did not conceal the fact that Mazzarella was an evangelical. On the contrary, he said "that a most delicate examination of his conscience had led him to embrace the evangelical religion." He might have added that the Gospel doctrines had not only taken hold of his mind, but changed his heart, influenced his whole life, and made his death a happy one. No doubt the fact of Mazzarella having obeyed the voice of his conscience and joined a poor and despised Church, will be greatly to his honour, in the opinion of all right-thinking men. Even after his death he gave a proof of his attachment to the Gospel, and of the breadth of his views, by leaving his little all (about £2000) to the Protestant Hospital of Genoa.

Other, and in a worldly point of view more illustrious deaths have cast their shadow of late over Italy. General Medici, the well-known lieutenant of Garibaldi, the aide-de-camp of King Victor Emanuel and Humbert, for a time Governor-General of Sicily, in which charge he displayed uncommon abilities, died after a long illness. The same day, Lanza, who was the Prime Minister of Victor Emanuel when the Italian troops broke down the walls of Rome, on the 20th September, 1870—the man who, from being a simple village doctor, had risen by his own unaided merits to occupy a foremost position amongst the counsellors of his king and the leaders of his country—died also. If any men were under the sentence of excommunication, launched by the late Pope against all those that had taken any part in despoiling him of his States, it was these two—Lanza especially, who had the honour of signing his name to the law which proclaimed Rome the capital of Italy. And yet both received the sacraments, and were buried with all ecclesiastical honours. It must be said that the Romish priests are always ready, in order to keep up the prestige of their religion, to content themselves with the slightest possible *minimum* in the way of recantation, and even with no recantation at all when it is not possible to have one. In the case of General Medici, the trick (I can call it by no nobler name) was soon done. They waited till the dying man was quite unconscious; then his wife, an English lady and a Protestant, was cajoled or forced away from his bedside, the priest was introduced, and performed what he called his duty. In this way appearances were safe, and the clergy could take part in the funeral. Lanza's case was not so easy, but it was disposed of no less satisfactorily to all parties.

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There has been a long discussion in the public papers as to whether he had recanted or not. The clericals say he had; his own family, and especially his nephew, who stood by him during the whole interview with the priest, gives the following version of the facts, which will be interesting to know, as they show what Roman Catholics understand by the "consolations of religion to dying people":—"I never left my uncle's bedside," wrote Signor Cammillo Lanza. "When the priest asked him if he was ready to *retract all he had done against religion and the laws of the Holy Church*, my uncle, who till then had answered 'yes' to all the priest's questions, looked at him with such indignation that this man hastened to pronounce the formula: '*Ego te absolvo a peccatis tuis*;' and in this way was the man who had battered down the walls of Porta Pia received back into the bosom of the Church, and buried with ecclesiastical honours. That Signor Lanza, the nephew, is right in his version of the occurrence is proved by the fact that the priest was severely admonished by his superiors. These flimsy comedies, played at the bedside of dying men of some note, are now seen through and laughed at by all sensible people; but the Romish priests persist in them, because they afford the opportunity of saying that So-and-so, after all he had done against the Holy Church, had gone back to her in his last moments, and been reconciled to the Holy Father.

Let us turn to better things. In the *Annuario Evangelico*, come to light for the fourth time, and containing very accurate statistics of all our Protestant Churches, we find that the number of Churches (native and foreign) and principal missionary stations of all denominations amount to 260. Rome has 16, Florence 15, Naples 12, Milan 11, Genoa 9, Turin 7, Venice 6, Leghorn 6, &c. As for the Sunday schools, they number in the Waldensian valleys 3165 pupils, in the Waldensian Italian Mission, 1878; in the Free Church, 710; amongst the Wesleyan Methodists, 633; whilst their Episcopal brethren have 315, and the Baptists, 200. In all, nearly 7000 pupils.

This last feature is very encouraging. Our evangelical schools on certain occasions have to appear in public, and every one is struck by their number and their order. So it was when several hundred children of our Florentine schools marched through the streets with banners flying, to join all the rest of the schools in Florence, to defile before the young prince of Naples, now hereditary prince of Italy, on his birthday. The correspondent of the *Nazione* writes from Genoa in sheer amazement at the number of children of all the evangelical schools of the town, that went in a body to the funeral of Mazzarella. He could not have believed that in a city so full of devotion to the Virgin, Mazzarella and his consorts in religion could have made such progress amongst the masses. He attributes it to our working in secret, but he is wrong there. Nothing can be more open and public than the way in which the work of evangelisation is carried on everywhere in Italy.

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Another hopeful sign is the progressive increase during the past few years of the circulation of Scriptures. In 1878, the issues of the British and Foreign Bible Societies, out of whose depots come almost all the Scriptures we possess, were in round figures 50,000 copies. They rose to 56,000 in 1879, to 59,000 in 1880, and have taken a leap to more than 70,000 last year. True, the increase is mainly on the smaller portions, there being, on the other hand, a small decrease in the sales of complete Bibles. But, thank God, there is enough in a single gospel to save a human soul, and it is a cause of fervent gratitude that so many gospels have been scattered far and wide, especially in the army, and at the Milan Exhibition last summer. I need not say that in these numbers are not included the thousands which well-meaning but unwise people distribute indiscriminately everywhere.

A similar increase, I am happy to say, has been met with in the circulation of tracts and religious periodicals. The sales of the Claudian Press, all things considered, have been, last year, much larger than they had ever been before. The thing is all the more remarkable that unhappily the country is flooded with bad literature of the worst Parisian type.

I am happy to say that the Rev. Mr. McDougall has been enabled to furnish the Chiesa Libera, in Venice, with capital premises, by buying the old Roman Catholic Church of St. Margherita, in one of the most densely populated parts of Venice. It is the first example of the kind in Venice, although it has happened in several other towns of Italy.

A. MEILLE

## GREECE.

## EVANGELICAL EFFORTS.

THE limits of a short letter do not permit any examination of the peculiar and powerful influences which have co-operated to make work among the orthodox Greeks everywhere, but especially in Greece, apparently at least, so unproductive.

It is certainly a fact that ever since the original plan of "reform work," which proved itself so mistaken, was given up by nearly all the missionary societies, comparatively small direct results have been realised from efforts to foster and develop native Evangelical Churches among the Greeks. These churches are few and small.

Still, this is not the only, nor, indeed, a correct standard by which the amount of work done, or results for good accomplished, are to be measured in any field.

Great as is the work done in Syria by the Presbyterian Board, as shown in the grand church with which Dr. Jessup is connected, or the college, at the head of which Dr. Bliss stands, still one must take into consideration not only these direct results, in order to arrive at any just estimate of the influence exerted by that noble mission, but also

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the great stimulus given to the Maronites, Greeks, and Mohammedans to develop their own institutions, so as to compete with, if not counteract, the influences of the missionaries.

The same facts should be taken into consideration in measuring the real good accomplished by the Presbyterians in Egypt, or the American Board in its glorious work among the Armenians and Bulgarians.

In Greece proper, since Protestant schools for the children of orthodox parents are forbidden by law, this great arm of mission work is powerless, but the introduction of Evangelical truth here is making itself clearly felt.

The number of converts is small, and the churches are insignificant, but the existence of these churches is a constant protest against the Established Church and its treatment of the Scriptures, as well as of its members. As an indirect result of what has been done by outside pressure, one seems justified in considering the following facts :—

1. Two Church papers have been started within the past two years, with this among other avowed objects—to counteract the work of the missionaries. These papers are edited by men of decided ability, and cannot fail to exert a great influence for good among the people.

2. One of these papers, taking as its text the fact that a new station had been established at Yanina by the Greek Evangelical Church, in an article two weeks ago set forth at considerable length the necessity of introducing more preaching into the services of the Church.

3. This same paper, some time ago, had an excellent article on the failure of the Orthodox Church to discharge her duties as that of a true Church, since (1) She made no effort to establish missions ; (2) She did almost nothing to instruct and edify her people ; and (3) She was absolutely powerless in cleansing herself of faithless members, as one of them was teaching the grossest materialism in the university, and nothing was done to hinder him.

4. Nearly 10,000 copies of Scriptures were sold during the past year by the two Bible Societies. Of these, more than one-half were translations into the Modern Greek, which are forbidden by the Holy Synod.

5. About two years ago a law was enacted by which the reading of the New Testament was made obligatory in the highest classes of the public schools. Until this law was passed, there was comparatively no reading of the Scriptures by the younger members of the Church, or those even older, who had only passed through the public schools.

6. A paper was drawn up, and signed by a large number of the most respectable merchants of Athens, wherein it was agreed that the shops should be shut on Sabbath. This compact has not been strictly kept. Still, it was a movement in the right direction.

7. At the recent elections, there were two candidates who have been constant and violent in their attacks upon the practices of the Church and her highest officers. They both failed of election, but obtained no mean minority. They both favour the reading of the Bible, although they are a long way off from a Protestant standpoint.

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8. The editor of an influential paper in Athens candidly expressed, in the presence of the writer, when asked why he persisted in publishing things about the Evangelical workers among the Greeks, which he knew to be untrue, that it was only in order to counteract their influence with the people.

The result of all efforts to do anything directly inside the Church, even of a less radical character—as proven by several examples within the last ten years—has been to force the person making such efforts into terms with the Church authorities, or into open protest against them.

A faithful persevering protest, by attracting the attention of the people, cannot fail to bring the leaders of the Church, sooner or later, to a sense of the danger of losing their hold upon them. Then—and scarcely before—some such reform may be possible.

ATHENS, 1882.

T. R. SAMPSON.

## NEW SOUTH WALES.

## THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY—THE SUSTENTATION FUND.\*

*By the Rev. ROBERT STEEL, D.D., Sydney.*

I HAVE delayed reporting the meeting of the General Assembly, which was held in the beginning of November, 1881, till the first year of the Sustentation Fund should come to a close. The meeting of the General Assembly was opened on the last Tuesday of October, 1881, by a sermon preached by the retiring moderator, the Rev. Henry Macready. The Rev. James Cosh, M.A., minister at Balmain—one of the suburbs of Sydney—was elected by a majority of votes to the chair. He has been an active and useful minister, and has been convener of the Committee on Missions to the Heathen. Two years ago, he was also elected Tutor in Exegetical Theology. He has stood high in the esteem of his brethren, and well deserved this additional mark of their confidence. The General Assembly received a very encouraging report on church extension, read by the Rev. James Cameron, M.A., who has been convener for many years. It stated that decided progress had been made during the year. Nine settlements had taken place, equal to a seventh of the entire Church. There had been four demissions and one death among ministers. New spheres were opening, and a supply of ministers from the mother country had arrived. Two of these and one from Canada were received by the General Assembly during its session. The sum of £1000 had been transmitted to the honorary agent in London to pay for the outfit and passage of ministers. As the colony has been making rapid progress of late, there was a call for a large extension of the Church also. In the city and suburbs of Sydney there are now seventeen settled charges, and a few more are wanted in rising suburbs.

\* A notice of this Assembly appeared in our February number. We omit from Dr. Steel's letter some passages on matters already recorded.

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The report on the Sustentation Fund was very encouraging. Three quarters had been paid at the rate of £300 a-year. Since the meeting of the General Assembly the fourth quarter has ended, and the list of contributors has been published. The secretary states that a sum of £16,112 had been received from sixty congregations. A dividend of £300 a-year had been paid to all entitled to receive it. Some nine ministers had received £250, four £200, and a very exceptional case £150. For a preliminary and tentative year, this has been a remarkable result, and augurs well for the future. The fund is administered by means of such salutary checks as experience has proved to be necessary in Scotland and England.

The General Assembly made new arrangements for carrying on its public business, and appointed committees to make full provision for facilitating the plans. Offices have been taken in a suitable locality, and the expenses of members of standing committees are now paid. This allows ministers from the country to attend at the chief meetings, which are held quarterly.

The Rev. Principal Kinross, who was our delegate to the General Council at Philadelphia, gave a very interesting address to the Assembly on the proceedings of the Council. Since that, he has given an excellent and instructive lecture at the annual meeting of St. Andrew's College, in December last, on the colleges of the United States. He spoke highly of these institutions of learning, and of the full curriculum of studies which they provide for students. St. Andrew's College, within the University of Sydney, has a good quota of resident students, as many, indeed, as both the Anglican and Roman Catholic Colleges put together. The university is about to extend its operations and increase its chairs, and will soon be able to provide for instruction in medicine, law, and natural science, as well as in arts. The Government has added £5000 a-year to its endowment, which is now £11,000 from the public treasury.

The statistics of the Church have been collected and arranged upon a methodical plan by the Rev. J. M. Ross. They show that there are now seventy-three pastoral charges in the Church, with 363 preaching stations. The ministerial spheres in the country districts are necessarily very large, as the Presbyterian population is only one in ten. Some of the parishes are therefore fifty, sixty, or a hundred miles in length by nearly as many in breadth. Every minister has a large amount of travelling, and needs to be an expert rider, though a buggy can also be used in many districts where the roads are good. There are now nine Presbyteries formed, and they cover a territory as large as Great Britain, France, and Ireland. The income of the Church for the year was about £26,546. There is an association for the relief of widows and orphans of ministers, and one is being formed for the benefit of aged and infirm ministers. These very important funds require time to grow, and have not as yet received any large donations.

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There are only two widows receiving allowances at present, and the annuities are very small.

An Intercolonial Presbyterian Conference is to be held in Sydney in the month of April. It is hoped that representatives may be present from several, if not all, the seven Australasian colonies. A very good beginning was made at Melbourne in 1880; but the International Exhibition there proved an unusual attraction. There are many matters of common interest to our Church in these colonies, and it is important that an understanding should be come to in reference to them, and some preparation be made for the federation of the Churches in the Southern Hemisphere, where there are now nearly 450 Presbyterian ministers.

## OPEN COUNCIL.

### THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND LITERATURE.

It is simply astonishing how utterly the question of the relationship of the Christian Church to literature—suggested for consideration in a recent number of *The Catholic Presbyterian*—has been hitherto ignored. Everything affecting the interests of the Church seems to be considered but this. Yet here is one of the most potent and universal factors of her condition. The wise and zealous philanthropist concerns himself with sanitary laws, seeks to provide pure and healthful recreations, labours to pass enactments which will help the wellbeing of the people, and such like, believing that he will thereby further the cause of Christ; but where are our press philanthropists or press associations for securing a literature which will act beneficially upon the Church? Yet we may safely assert that current literature tells for good or for evil upon the life and health of the Church far more than any other social condition whatever. We complain of the coldness of our congregations, and the pointlessness of our sermons; of the general worldliness of our Christianity; and with reason. For all this many causes are assigned. But here is one which is universally ignored. The pulpit has possession of the minds of men for only one day in the seven. During the other six days, the newspaper and the magazine are masters of the situation. The reader comes under their sway day by day—probably the newspaper both begins and ends the day. This cannot take place without influencing and biassing the mind, even when the paper which you read is one whose principles you profess to abhor, and whose irreligiosity you deplore; yet it affects you. Some good cause is the subject of a series of elaborate sneers; you will not desert the cause on that account, but you will feel more coldly towards it. Some good man is credited with the basest and meanest of motives; well, you do not believe, but

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you comfortably ascribe to him some little grain of the mud which is cast upon him. An audacious assertion is made that some well-known Christian defence is utterly exploded ; well, you question the fact very much, but still you are moved. And thus onward. Now, is it to be supposed that he who has been subjected to such influences all the week, will enter into the sanctuary on the Sabbath with a soul aglow with spiritual fire, or will come to the study of the Word of God with the spirit of a little child? No, his week's reading has probably developed in him a cold, carping, and perhaps sceptical spirit. To preach to such hearers is, but for the sovereign mercy of God, to throw water on a sandbank. The soil is destroyed, there is no good and honest heart for the reception of the word. Can we wonder if the Church's arrows are merely blunted, and fall uselessly on the ground?

We know nothing so sad as the thoughtlessness of professedly Christian people in the direction we indicate. Neither are we prepared to suggest any remedy save the arousing of men's consciences on the subject. Let it be proclaimed as a Christian duty, necessary for Christian protection, that we must make even our daily reading of the newspaper a matter of conscience. If keeping a good conscience here involves some little sacrifice and self-denial, what then? The same difficulty obtains in regard to all Christian duties whatever. One thing must be plain, that it is high time this whole question were thoroughly ventilated. The Church's life and health are more involved here than in almost any of the questions which come prominently before her. Thanks, surely, to *The Catholic Presbyterian* for sounding a note of alarm.

It does seem, at first sight, strange that our current literature should be so unfriendly and sceptical. We say *current* literature, because our more permanent literature, as a whole, is by no means so infected by this spirit. The books that promise to live are not generally speaking the work of professional *litterateurs*. The writers who give us books of travel and adventure, the divines who supply us with solid theology, the authors of the volumes which daily appear on science, medicine, and law, and such like subjects, are not by profession literary men. With a few exceptions, such as Buckle, Carlyle, Froude, our standard writers are men actively engaged in the duties of some profession connected with the subjects on which they write. It is then the literary fraternity proper who chiefly betray the animus unfriendly to religion, and who pen those cold and scoffing articles which must work so disastrously in the minds of those who read them. How, then, does it happen that this influential class of men so frequently imbibe and exhibit the spirit of which we complain? "Strike, but hear," if we venture to suggest some answers to this question.

In the first place, many individuals who earn their bread by daily literary work have no Sabbath. We do not believe that any one can thrive spiritually without the weekly rest. The contrary is often asserted, but no proof is forthcoming. As a matter of fact, in daily life

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those individuals who have no Sabbath, or only Sabbath of a few hours, have no religion, and do not pretend to have any. This assertion may seem harsh; we cannot help it, it is true; and we never met with an exception to the rule, nor with any one who had ever stumbled upon an exception. There may be exceptions, but they must be so few as only to prove the rule. Now, our journalists, as a class, have scarcely any Sabbath; we are not astonished, therefore, if they have little interest in, or are unfriendly to true religion.

A second answer to the same question is to be found in the fact that where there is no Sabbath, there is no Church connection. A Church connection is, as a rule, essential to Christian life. The grace of God in any one's heart leads him instinctively to the assembly of the saints. There always will be eccentric individuals who will combat this tendency, just as there will probably always be vegetarians, though we have teeth given us for eating flesh. Where, then, men have no relationship to the Christian community, or only one of the slightest possible character, we need not be astonished if they drift away from Christianity altogether, and become indifferent and hostile to its claims.

A third explanation of the indifference or hostility to religion of the literary class, is to be found in their utter ignorance in this particular direction. Religious knowledge no more comes to us by instinct than other knowledge. In the majority of instances, it is to be feared, our literary men never had the opportunity of acquiring religious knowledge, and they do not feel the necessity of acquiring it. They know it already, as much as they wish to know. They know it so well, in their own opinion, that they have no hesitation in correcting the divinity of the divine, or in preaching a sermon to a bench of bishops. No one can read the lucubrations of many editors and magazine writers without discovering in their authors ignorance in this direction of the most pitiful description, accompanied with a self-sufficiency which deceives the superficial reader.

We venture to suggest yet one more consideration—newspaper or literary tradition. There is nothing upon which newspaper writers are fonder of enlarging than the influence of tradition upon the Church, and upon Christian men. They themselves speak as if they were wholly free from its influence, and were able always to take a dispassionate and liberal view of things. But alas! in no class do we see more of that very spirit which they condemn than among literary men. As soon as they are installed in the editor's chair—yea, as soon as they carry the reporter's note-book, they cease to belong to ordinary society; they adopt, as by instinct, the spirit and airs of their predecessors and contemporaries, and no considerations of an outside description will have the least effect upon them. We can tell how the typical litterateur will view any question beforehand. We know exactly, for instance, how he will view, from his serene height, any earnest religious effort. We could indite beforehand his comments on any religious controversy; and he is

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utterly impervious to any attempt to enlighten him. Verily, we might often fling back at him his own epithets, and ask him to take home to himself those accusations of bigotry, intolerance, and tradition, which he freely applies to the subjects of his criticisms.

There is, indeed, one excuse, which ought to have its weight in judging those who indite our daily literature: most of it is written in exceeding haste. Go into any editorial sanctum, at certain hours of the day or night, and look at the writer as he hastens to fill his sheet, and say whether opinions so formed can pretend to be dispassionate or very well reasoned out. The wonder is that they are so intelligent as they mostly happen to be. The demands upon them come too rapidly to allow time for accurate thinking. Yet again, they write at too great a distance from the scene of conflict. They speculate; other men work. The speculator has his own conceptions of what ought to be; the worker knows precisely what is, and knows, moreover, that the speculator's nostrums, brought face to face with actual work, would be ridiculous and absurd. Hence the newspaper and the magazine are often found firing over the heads of those whose work they criticise—not capable of understanding them, and too wise in their own conceits to suspect their ignorance.

All this may help us to understand how it is that our current literature is so often unsatisfactory. But they are most directly responsible for this state of things who are content to submit to it, and habitually patronise it. These wares which we complain of could not be brought into the market if they did not find purchasers. This is only, after all, an illustration of the law of supply and demand. Hence it seems to us that the only remedy for the evil is a higher Christian tone. Surely the rule: "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," applies here as elsewhere. Our reading, and our patronage of literature ought to be matters of conscience as well as other things. Can we with a good conscience habitually subject ourselves to the influence of a scoffing and sceptical literature, and give it our cordial support? What does the first Psalm testify on conduct such as this? Then, if we ourselves are so strong and built up in the faith that we can take pitch into our bosom and not be defiled, how will it fare with the ignorant, the weak, and the young? "Through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died?" Here, we are persuaded, is one of the sources of the inefficiency of the Church's labours. The week's reading must either prepare or unfit for the Sabbath's hearing. The susceptibility of the hearer must depend, humanly speaking, upon the influences to which he has been previously subjected. "The Christian Church and Literature" is a great and a grave subject, one which ought to be much in the thoughts of Christian men. May the watchmen of Zion awake to perceive its true importance, and appeal to the consciences of men on their duty concerning it!

A. F. DOUGLAS.